



Publisher & Author's Note:

This book is designed as a reference and aid for experienced practitioners. The techniques practised today may differ from the published illustrations. We do not practise a stagnant style but continually refine our skills through the analysis of techniques.

Readers may risk injury when practising the illustrated techniques without proper knowledge. To avoid the risk of injury, it is recommended to learn these techniques under the guidance of an experienced teacher.

The publisher and author cannot be legally held accountable for any incorrect use of the illustrated techniques.

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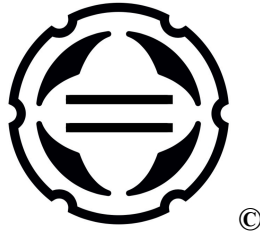
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NAIGAI RYU

School for Traditional Japanese Culture

Preface

This school was founded on January 1st, 1997, by Sensei Van Loo Herman, with the aim of restoring traditional values in budo and also introducing people to the rich Japanese culture and history.



ZANSHIN

Our goal is to create a “zanshin” environment, a state of consciously being relaxed. During the lessons, there is an atmosphere of politeness and respect for each other. The techniques we learn will only be used when necessary and not against each other. We aim to maintain the unity of body and mind at all times.

The techniques are taught with an understanding of their origin, content, and purpose. For example, one cannot practise "aiki" without knowledge of "ki." We want to provide everyone with the opportunity to delve into the background of their discipline. Emphasis is placed on understanding the basic techniques and making connections with other martial arts.

In our school, you can find, among other things: koryu jujutsu, Naigai ryū jujutsu, Naigai ryū aiki bojutsu, Muso Jikiden Eishin ryū iaijutsu, shiatsu (acupressure massage), ki techniques (breathing & energy generation/direction), zen stretching (Masunaga stretching and general stretching).

In this book, we briefly explore the origin and present of bojutsu, Naigai ryū aiki bojutsu, and describe the mudansha and yudansha programs. The illustrations can serve as extra assistance or reminders.

Herman Van Loo.



History of the Stick

During the Bronze Age, which spanned from around 3300 BCE to 1200 BCE, humans already created their own weapons using stick and stones. One could argue that weapons existed before humans did.

Throughout this era, sticks served various purposes across different cultures:

1. **Functional Tool:** Sticks were initially used as walking sticks or as support for travellers and shepherds navigating uneven terrain.
2. **Weaponry:** As societies developed, sticks became essential weapons. They were effective for both offense and defence in battles and skirmishes. The length and thickness of sticks varied depending on their intended use and the preferences of the wielder.
3. **Symbolism and Rituals:** In several ancient cultures, sticks held symbolic significance. They were used by priests, leaders, and shamans during religious ceremonies or as a mark of authority.
4. **Measuring and Surveying:** Some sticks were used as measuring tools by early astronomers or surveyors, aiding in the understanding of celestial movements or land measurement.
5. **Artistic Expression:** Craftsmen often adorned sticks with intricate designs or carvings, showcasing artistic skills and cultural motifs of the time.

Across the Bronze Age, the use of sticks evolved alongside advancements in metallurgy and craftsmanship. While the basic form remained constant (a long, straight rod) its functions and significance diversified across various societies and cultures.

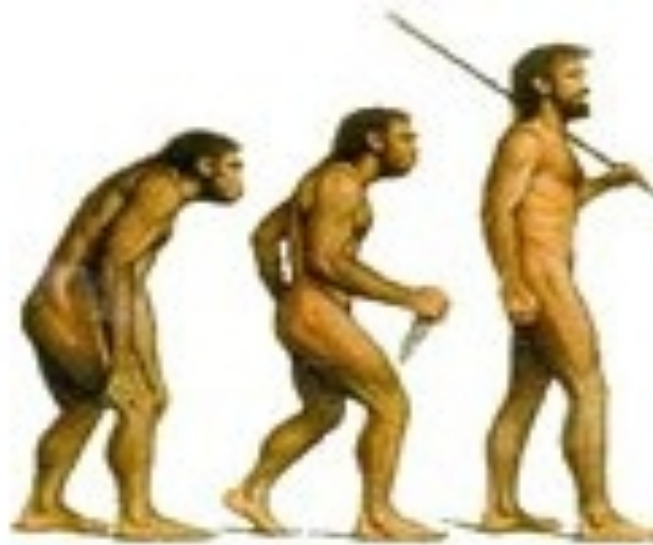


A stick is likely the first weapon that humans used for hunting. It could be easily found, was not difficult to handle, and could be used for multiple purposes. However, a drawback was that one had to approach their prey at a very close distance. The stick served both as an offensive and defensive weapon.

At that time, a sharp point was added to the stick, allowing it to be thrown and thus extending its reach.

When we look at how people lived with the help of a stick, “bojutsu” is something that originally grew from nature. In essence, the core of a stick as a weapon has not changed and the length of the stick varied according to the user's needs.

Stick techniques can be found all over the world. They vary in style depending on the climate and clothing worn. A stick or “*bo*” was vital for the common man. Various techniques were practised and studied for self-defence, and the effective techniques were passed down.



The evolution of the stick takes us, among other places, to Africa, where the stick is still clearly present among some tribes. Its use has been passed down from generation to generation, either for its symbolic value or for practical purposes.

The stick is also a symbol of status for the man, the warrior, the hunter, etc...

The use of weapons has also played a role in shaping human evolution, both positively and negatively. In the last 5000 years, there have been only 280 years of peace.



Africa

The hunters of various African tribes used a long stick for hunting and self-defence. To this day, the long stick is still commonly seen among remote tribes. It also holds a status and symbolic value.

The ancient tribes in the Omo Valley

The Omo Valley is a somewhat inaccessible region in southern Ethiopia. Because of this, there are still various ancient tribes living here, many of whom have rarely or never seen a white person. These tribes still dress in animal skins decorated with shells or beads, with their hair adorned with red ochre and clay caps.

The Mursi Tribe

The most famous tribe is the Mursi. This remote tribe, even within the Omo Valley, is best known for the lip plate tradition, where women wear large clay plates as decoration in their lower lips. The Mursi are a primitive tribe and are somewhat wary of outsiders. They often display aggressive behaviour, and stick fighting is an integral part of their culture. Donga is a Mursi tribe stick fighting tournament that only happens once a year. Every local village sends their top male fighters to an undisclosed location once a year for village honour.

Mursi warriors have horseshoe-shaped scars on their bodies. These notches are placed on the right arm for male victims and on the left arm for female victims. If they are very successful, they can place them on their thighs.



The Mursi Tribe

The Suri Tribe

Among the Suri tribe in Ethiopia, violent stick fights are still held today. These fights are traditionally used to maintain order and demonstrate masculinity. Young men from the village drink a bowl of fresh cow's blood as part of this tradition.

The level of violence involved is incredible. The men are extremely aggressive and can cause injuries ranging from head trauma to eye damage, and sometimes even fatalities. This continues throughout the day, and having more scars and wounds is seen as a mark of honour.

Today, this ancient practice is slowly being replaced by firearms.



The Suri Tribe from Ethiopia

The Maasai Tribe

The Maasai believe in the god “Engai” as the origin of their culture.

God “Engai” had three children, each of whom received different gifts. The first child received a bow and arrow, from whom hunters descended. The second child received a Plow, and his descendants became farmers. The third child received a stick, and he became the herder of cattle. The modern Maasai are descendants of this third child.

The boys set out as soon as they can walk. Barefoot, with only a long stick for defence, the Maasai journey with their cattle across the grasslands. The eyes of lions and hyenas follow the herd. The Maasai of Kenya are the kings of the savanna. Some of the men are warriors, responsible for the safety of the tribe after undergoing long and arduous initiation ceremonies.

Of course, there are other tribes in Africa where the use of the stick can be found.

Egypt

References to the martial art 'Tahteb' have been found in ancient Egyptian tombs.



In the 1950s and 1960s, this was a very violent game, and in the seventies during a match between two men, the loser could be injured or even killed. Nowadays, striking is no longer allowed in this form of stick fighting. In the city of Sohag, located on the banks of the Nile River in central Egypt, a school that keeps this martial art alive.



Zayed Abd El Naiem and Masry Abd El Fatha are dancing with their “El Nabout” sticks as a demonstration of Tahteb, an ancient form of martial arts and dance, in Sohag, Egypt, in 2017.

Tahteb requires a lot of skill and control. There are rules on how to hold the stick and which strikes are allowed. Some strikes were meant to be lethal. Now, this martial art has become a non-contact sport.



Europe

In Europe, various forms of stick weapons were used for self-defence. The length of the stick could vary from two to six meters, often with a thrusting or cutting weapon attached to the end.



Stick weapons had significant reach and were more suitable than other weapons for keeping multiple attackers at a distance. In medieval Europe, stick weapons were the most common weapons on the battlefield. Many manuscripts have been found describing techniques with these weapons. Stick weapons were particularly suitable for infantry and very inexpensive to produce. The advantage they had over, for example, swords, was that they allowed you to maintain the necessary distance from your opponent while still having the capability to injure or kill.

However, stick weapons were also widely used in warfare to wound rather than kill the enemy.

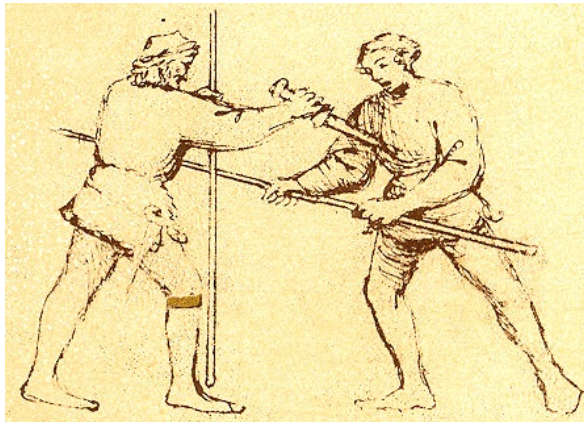
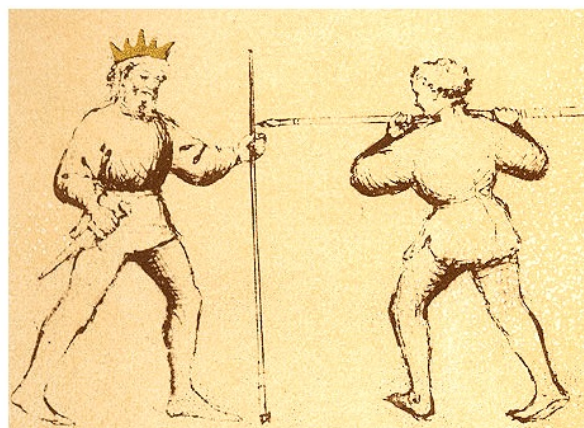
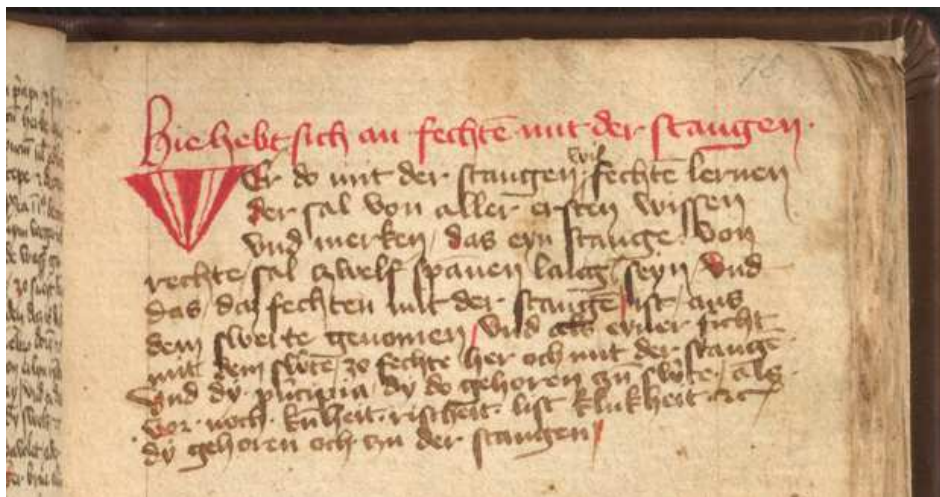


Germany

The Germanic National Museum in Nuremberg, Germany, has a manuscript dating back to around 1389 that describes the use of the stick. The following is described:

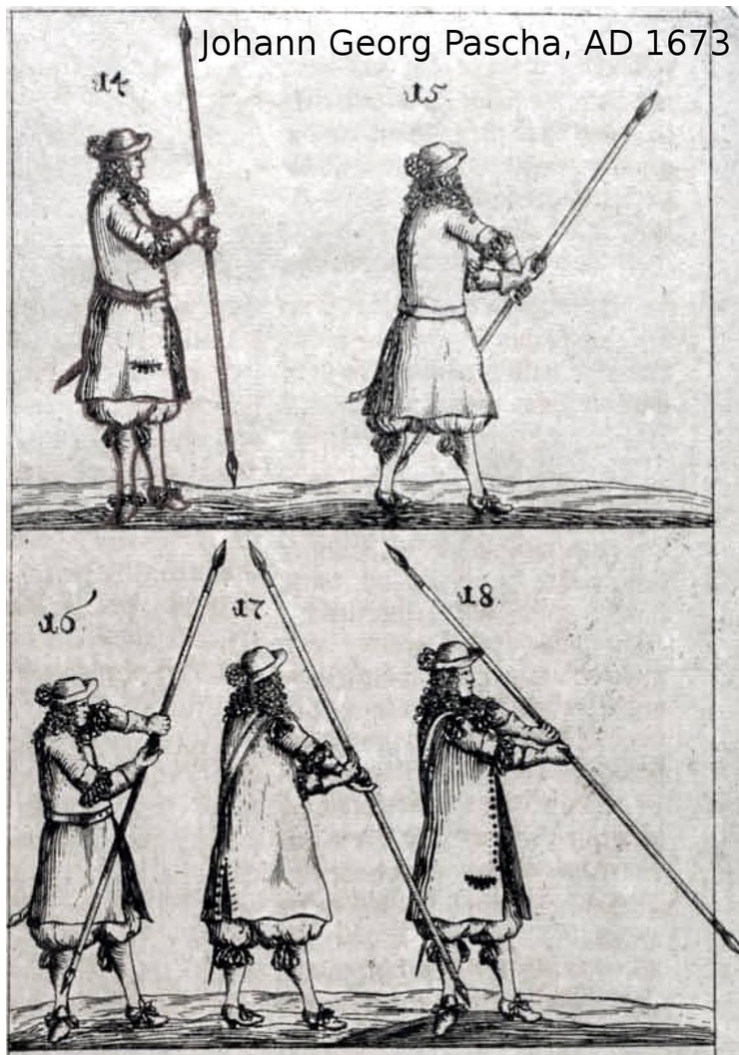
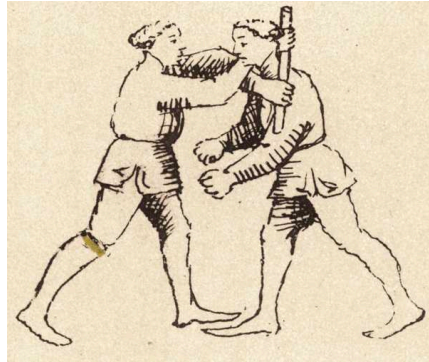
"Those who want to fence with the stick should first know and observe that a good stick should have a length of 12 spans. A span is the distance between the thumb and pinkie finger of an outstretched hand, approximately 20 cm. Fencing with the stick is derived from fencing with the sword. One should use the stick as if it were a sword. Apply principles such as courage, speed, tactics, intelligence, etc..."

The entire work forms the beginning of a combat description in textbook style, capturing the teachings of a true master. The stick had a length ranging from 1.80 m to 2.40 m.



Around two decades after the aforementioned manuscript, "Fiore dei Liberi" published the "Flos Duellatorum" (in 1409 or 1410). Fiore had studied under the German fencing master Johannes Suvenus (Johane dicto sueno), who described him as his most important teacher among the many German and Italian masters he had studied with at the end of the 14th century. Fiore compiled one of the first illustrated fencing manuals, demonstrating a mix of techniques. He also described the short stick in his book:

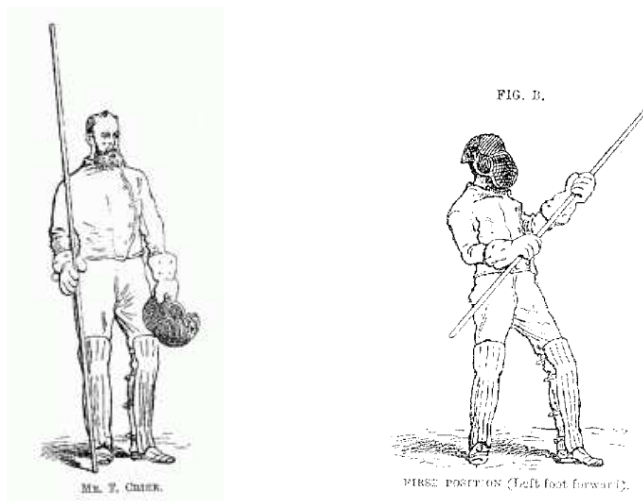
"With a short stick, I bind your neck, and if I fail to bring you to the ground, you may count yourself lucky."



England

Quarterstaff or quarter-stick

The oldest descriptions of stick techniques first appear in England around the 15th century, specifically in an English work containing technical information about the quarterstaff. The name "quarterstaff" likely refers to the way the staff was made, by sawing or splitting a tree into four parts. A staff of lower quality was made from a branch. The name may also be derived from how the staff is held, with one hand in the middle and the other halfway between the middle and the end. However, the grip is not described in the old writings. Another theory associates the length of the staff with the user, being a quarter longer than the user's height.



In England, the quarterstaff was used primarily during the Middle Ages and up to the 18th century. The hardwood staff had a length of six to nine feet (1.8 to 2.7 meters), sometimes equipped with a metal point, end caps, or spikes.



In the early 1700s, the quarterstaff became known as a sport and self-defence weapon in England. Competitions were held with the quarterstaff. This martial art was promoted, among

others, by James Figg, a famous stage gladiator. After retiring from the stage in 1735, he taught this style to young aristocrats at his own fencing school in London's Oxford Street. Today, one can still practise this art.

Below are some examples of techniques used in Europe with a long staff.



A modified version of quarterstaff fencing, employing bamboo or ash staves and protective equipment adapted from fencing, boxing, and cricket was revived as a sport in some London fencing schools and at the Aldershot Military Training School during the later 19th century. Works on this style were published by Thomas McCarthy and by Allanson-Winn and Phillips-Wolley.

The low guard is considered the central guard. Blows were primarily delivered downwards either directly or at angles. Parries of blows to the legs were done either by lifting the leg away from the line of attack or by thrusting one end of the staff into the ground and releasing the foremost hand that was in danger of being struck. Thrusts were often performed with the release of the forward hand and a step with the forward leg like a fencing lunge, stretching forward the back hand as far as possible. Longer thrusts were delivered with a full step forward with the back leg accompanying the back hand. It was recommended that at the end of delivering a blow, the back leg and foot should be compassed about so as to fall roughly into a line with the front foot and the point of the weapon. The same circling round of the back leg was applied in parries as well.

The position with one hand held at the quarter and the other at the middle of the staff is not found in early modern manuals, but it is described in the quarterstaff manuals published in the late 19th century, e.g. McCarthy (1883): "both hands should be 2.5 feet (76 cm) apart, and the same distance from each end".

Canary Islands

Lucha del garrote - Stick Fighting

For Canary Island shepherds, "el garrote" (long stick) was a practical tool, both for moving through the landscape with the support of the stick and for self-defence in certain situations.

The aim of this form of fighting is to defeat the opponent without causing them harm.

The most notable aspects of this sport include:

- The unique "enganches", a technique that immobilizes the opponent's stick.
- The "revoledas", creating an opening to attack.
- The "zapatas".
- The "trabas", used to push the opponent over.
- The way the participants face each other.
- The long, strong sticks that are as long as the participants themselves or even slightly longer.

However, it's not the length of the stick that is the decisive factor but rather how it is wielded to defeat an opponent.

Their tactics involve using the stick to protect the body while simultaneously attacking the opponent. The body is placed directly opposite the opponent in the most stable position, allowing for effective protection using "el garrote". At the same time, characteristic movements are executed with both ends of the stick, such as "el braceo" and "mudar los manos".





Asia

In many martial disciplines, sticks have been used as weapons for centuries, with ranging lengths from chopsticks used for eating to sticks nearly three meters long. The stick is undoubtedly the oldest and most studied weapon. Below is an overview of some Asian countries.

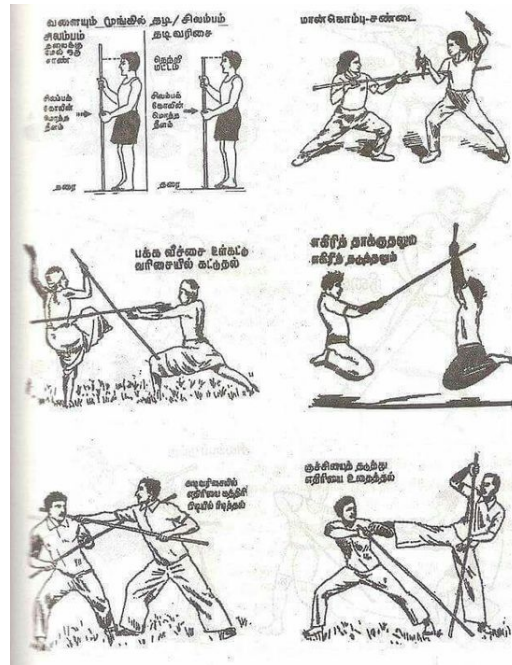
South India

Silambam

Silambam is a weapon-based Indian martial art that originates in South India on the Indian subcontinent. This style is mentioned in Tamil Sangam literature. References in the Silappadikkaram and other works of Sangam literature indicate that Silambam has been practised since the 4th century BCE. It is derived from the Tamil word "silam," which means hill. The term "silambambu" refers to a specific type of bamboo from the Kurinjimala hills, now known as Kerala. Thus, the style was named Silambam after its primary weapon, the bamboo staff. The staff was used for self-defence and to fend off animals in the Kurinji hills, and it later evolved into the current martial art form.



The ancient city of Madurai served as the epicentre for the spread of Silambam. The Silambam staff was adopted by the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans, spreading to the Middle East, Europe, and North Africa. The Tamil kingdom that encompassed South India and Sri Lanka propagated it throughout Southeast Asia.



Kalarippayattu

Kalarippayattu is one of the oldest martial arts originating in Kerala, South India. Among other things, they use long flexible sticks in a complex series of jumps and rhythmic strikes. This style is said to be 2000 years old and was brought to the Shaolin monks in China by Indian Buddhist monks.

It is regarded as one of the oldest martial arts in existence, known for its fluid movements, rigorous training methods, and diverse techniques encompassing strikes, kicks, grappling, weaponry, and healing methods.



This martial art is divided into different components:

1. **Meithari (body conditioning):** Emphasizes physical conditioning through exercises that improve flexibility, agility, and stamina.
2. **Kolthari (armed combat):** Involves training with various weapons like the staff, sword, dagger, and shield.
3. **Ankathari (unarmed combat):** Focuses on strikes, kicks, grappling, and nerve strikes for self-defence.
4. **Uzhichil (massage/therapy):** Involves the study of Ayurvedic medicine for treating injuries sustained during training.

Kalarippayattu practitioners train extensively in flexibility, balance, speed and precision. They often perform intricate sequences of movements called "katas" or "kali", showcasing a combination of defensive and offensive techniques. The art form not only teaches combat skills but also emphasizes mental discipline, meditation and control. It has historical and cultural significance, representing a blend of physical prowess, spirituality and traditional healing practices.



China

Gunshu 棍術

The staff is one of the most simple and ancient of all martial arts weapons, evolving from a simple long stick or club. The use of the long stick in Chinese martial arts dates back to at least the legendary period of “*Huang Di*” (the mythical Yellow Emperor, 2697 to 2597 BCE), and most likely even earlier.

Staff fighting was raised to a supreme art by generations of Shaolin monks. Over time, staff skills and the Temple became synonymous. The monks heavily favoured the staff and its methods because it had no blades, and as most traveling monks (or travellers in general) carried walking sticks, they could keep with the practitioner at all times without attracting undue attention or suspicion. The staff was also the weapon of the Shaolin Temple’s protection deity: **Vajrapani**.



Chinese stick fighting (gunshu) is a part of wushu, which is the umbrella term for all Chinese martial arts. The stick is the oldest weapon in the world and is therefore referred to as the grandfather of weapons in China.

Chinese stick fighting is a highly dynamic form of movement, involving the entire body, especially the shoulders. The movements are faster and more powerful than those in Taiji hand forms and sword forms. However, in stick forms, they always work from Taiji principles: balance, concentration, movement from the centre, relaxation, the interplay of yin and yang, full and empty.

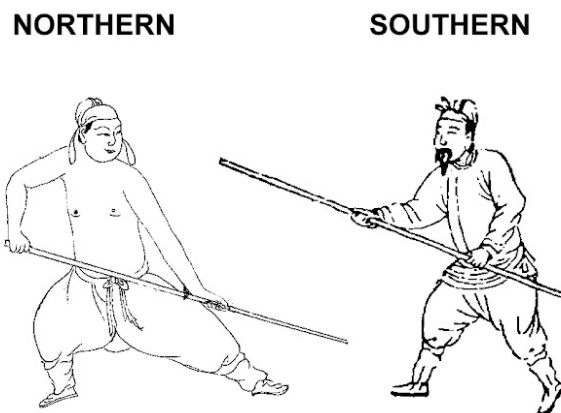
One learns to handle a long stick of approximately 180 cm (about 6 feet) in both solo and paired forms. This includes techniques for both offence and defence.



Monk Jinnaluo 紧那罗, who helped defend the Temple from an attack in the 14th century, was later believed to have been an incarnation of the protector deity because of his staff skill.

The northern and southern styles

The difference between northern and southern styles is evident in the way the gun 棍 (*bo*) is held, as clearly shown below.



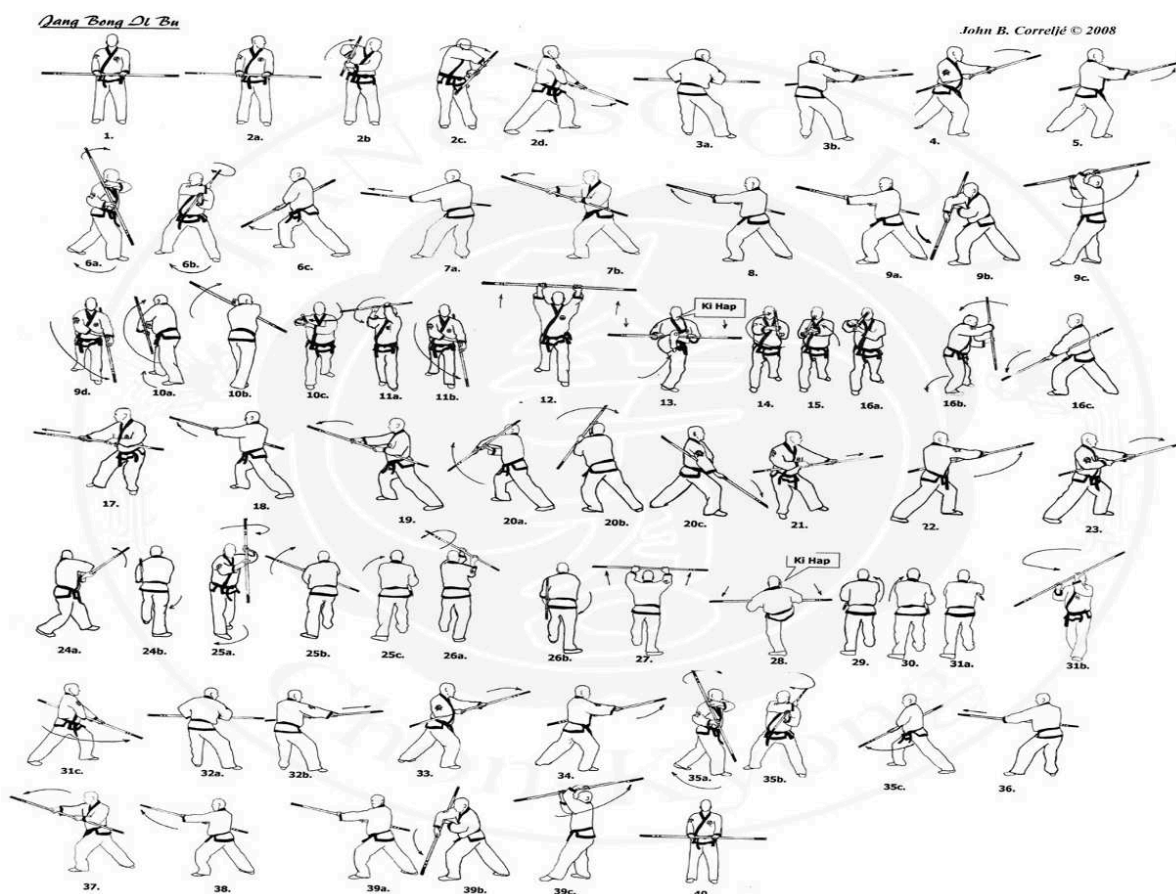
The southern style (Nangun 南棍) is similar to how we hold the “*bo*”. There are various kata to practise the use of the gun. Below is an example of a kata.



Korea

Jang Bong

In Korean, the long staff is referred to as "jang bong." Below is an example of a *bo* kata.



Common in Asia

In Chinese, Indian, Indonesian, and Filipino martial disciplines, sticks in various sizes are used as weapons. However, in this context, we are focusing on the “*bo*”.



Ryukyu Kingdom – Okinawa

Okinawa

Okinawa is an island in the East China Sea and is the main island of the Ryukyu Islands. It has its own language and culture, which differs from Japanese culture. The indigenous language is called Uchinaguchi and is spoken by fewer and fewer residents.

In the 13th century, Okinawa consisted of three rivalling principalities: Hokuzan in the north, Chuzan in the centre, and Nanzan in the south.

Since the first mission from the Ming Dynasty visited Okinawa in 1372, a strong relationship began to develop between the island group and China. In exchange for recognition of Chinese cultural supremacy (through an oath of loyalty from the king to the Chinese emperor), the Ryukyu Kingdom gained access to trade with China, which was of great importance to its role in Asian commerce. Additionally, the royal house could legitimize itself as an independent nation under Chinese hegemony as long as Ryukyu adhered to the Chinese ethical and cultural model.

First visit of Sapposhi, Chinese envoys, to Ryukyu.

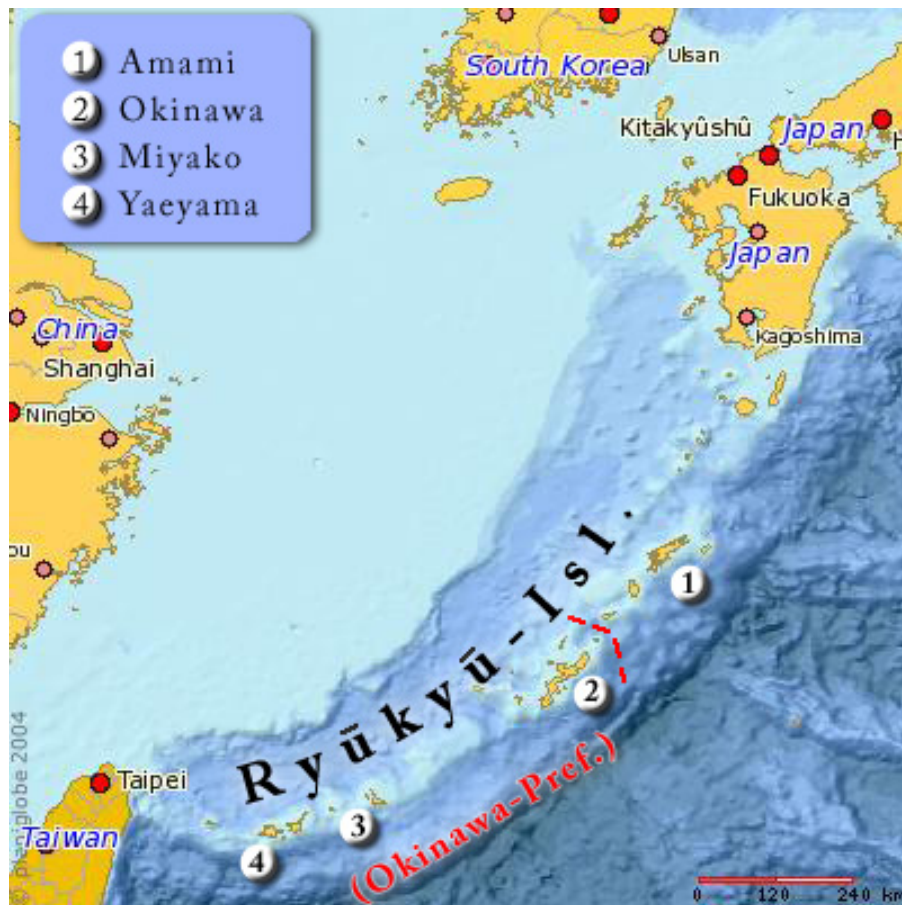
It is believed that in the early 15th century, Sapposhi, high-ranking Chinese missionaries from the Fujian province, brought bojutsu techniques to the Ryukyu Islands. Sapposhi were special envoys of the Chinese emperor and a source of cultural exchange between China and Okinawa.

About twenty Sapposhi, along with their entourage, came to Okinawa, including several martial arts experts.



In addition to Okinawa, *bo* techniques from China were also introduced to Japan during this time.

In 1429, King Shohashi united the three Ryukyu kingdoms. The Ryukyu Kingdom was a semi-independent kingdom that ruled over most of the Ryukyu Islands from the 14th to the 19th century. Their kingdom extended to the Amami Islands, the Miyako Islands, and the Yaeyama Islands and was tributary to China. Trade with China contributed to the prosperity of these islands. The population also engaged in trade with Japan, the Korean Peninsula, Siam, Malacca, and Luzon



Bubishi and Kikoshinsho

The people of Okinawa also frequently travelled to South China and encountered staff techniques (*bojutsu*) during their journeys. The *bo* techniques have ancient origins and were likely refined after the Heian period, around 1127.

They studied these techniques and secretly developed Chinese martial arts manuals called *Bubishi* and *Kikoshinsho*. These techniques closely align with the techniques used today. Both books emphasize that *bojutsu* is the essence and foundation of all martial arts that use weapons. From ancient documents, it is evident that Okinawa *bojutsu* is a combination of Chinese *bojutsu*, the physical characteristics of the Okinawan people, and the political situation on the island.

The *bojutsu* forms practised by the Ryukyu samurai have names ending in "Kon". Their art was presented to the king, and these techniques are distinct from "Mura Bo," the *bojutsu* of the common people. The term "*bo*" is the Japanese name for the Okinawan "kon", a six-shaku-length staff.

Satsuma invasion

In 1609, the Japanese Satsuma clan invaded Okinawa from Kyushu, putting an end to Okinawa's independence. The Satsuma clan sought to destroy any evidence of Okinawa's martial arts and therefore prohibited the residents from possessing weapons.

This was highly detrimental to the residents, because they could not defend themselves against the powerful swords and jujutsu techniques of the samurai. The samurai, with their swords, became the rulers of Okinawa.

This led to the development of the Okinawan weapons, as we know them today. Tonfa, kama, nunchaku, sai, and *bo* techniques were created after the weapons ban in 1609. These new weapons were originally used as agricultural tools but became deadly weapons in the hands of Okinawa's residents. When the population was attacked, they could quickly transform their simple tools into valuable and lethal weapons against the samurai warriors.

The Ryukyu Kingdom was incorporated into the shogunate of Japan but remained semi-independent and maintained relations with China. From 1872, the Okinawa Kingdom became part of the Japanese Empire. The kingdom was abolished by Japan in 1879 during the Meiji Restoration and annexed as Okinawa Prefecture, after becoming a Japanese vassal state a few years earlier.



Ryukyu Delegation in Edo

In Okinawa, the kon (or *bo* in Japanese) is likely derived from a farm tool called "tenbin". The tenbin is a staff that was carried over the shoulders and used to hang fish or water buckets.



As of 2011, the tenbin is still used in China to carry various loads.



The *bo* may also have originated from the walking staff of the monks. They used a staff for easier climbing and possibly for self-defence. The *bo* is commonly referred to as Rokushaku *bo*, which means six times 30.3 centimetres or 182 cm. Typically, that was also the length of the *bo* used.

The warriors of Shiri Castle in Okinawa used a shorter *bo*. The *bo* was shortened to 175 cm to avoid any disadvantages in case of indoor combat.



Shiri Castle

Different dimensions of the *bo* were also used by other schools.

Bojutsu is taught as a fundamental weapon in Japanese Ryu Kyu Kobujutsu. There are 22 practice forms (*kata*) preserved with this *bo*.

The standard *bo* is the Okinawa *bo*. What specifically distinguishes this *bo* is the tapering of the ends, known as "kontei". This design advantage helps maintain the balance at the centre of the *bo* and makes it easier to grip. It also provides greater flexibility and strength compared to a regular straight *bo*.



In ancient times, the Kuba (Chinese palm tree) was used as the material for the *bo*. Kuba was an ideal material for the *bo* because it didn't easily break or bend. If the *bo* did break, it still remained an effective weapon due to the sharp broken end. In more recent years, oak has also been used as a material for the *bo*.

The traditional stick techniques of Ryukyu

Before World War II, there were approximately 49 different styles of bojutsu. Nowadays, there are about 11 styles that remain.

Mura-bo (bojutsu)

These techniques have been preserved over the years in various areas of Okinawa. During annual folklore festivals, they are still proudly and respectfully demonstrated as a traditional sport and cultural heritage from their villages and towns.

As these techniques were openly performed in village squares and sacred places (utaki), it is believed that through this connection, the intention was to build seishin. Seishin means spirit, mind, and it refers to a pure spirit. The more dedicated, persevering, and resilient one is, the purer the soul.

From ancient times, technical skills with the Mura-bo were passed down from person to person along with their background to better understand the techniques. From a young age, one would learn:

- The fundamental technical skills while respecting kindness,
- Safety considerations,
- Self-practice initiated independently,
- Learning the technical skills of the kata,
- Training both the body and the mind,
- Passing on the tradition in its current condition to the next generation.

There is limited information available regarding Mura-bo.



Mura-bo children, from Yomitan

Nozato bo

The bojutsu of Nozato, known as Ichimeido-bo, was widely practiced as a form of martial art. They have two components in bojutsu: Hitoribo, performed by one person, and Kumibo, performed by two people. They use the rokushaku bo (six-foot staff) and shakuhajiri or sanshaku bo (approximately 3 feet long).



Nozato-bo, from Nozato



A kama attached to a bamboo *bo*

Yamanni ryū 山根流

One of the most famous schools is Yamanni-ryū 山根流, also known as Yamanni-Chinen-ryū and Yamane Ryu. It is an Okinawan kobudō school where the *bo* is the main weapon. This school was named after the Chinen family, which was a prominent aristocratic family from the Ryukyu Islands. The Chinen family came to Okinawa from China in the late 18th century.



Sakugawa SATUNUSHI

Sakugawa Satunushi 佐久川 寛賀 (Tode Sakugawa 1733-1815) was responsible for protecting prominent Ryukyu families and, according to the history of the ryu, learned the art from a certain Kushanku (Kwang Shang Fu), a Chinese envoy to Okinawa. Later, he resided in Akata village in Shuri, Okinawa.

Sakugawa developed the Yamanni ryu style in the late 18th century and passed it on to the Chinen family. Yamagusuku Chinen was one of his students who practiced kata from China. Sanda Chinen (1842–1925), also known as Yamanni Usumei and Yamane Tanmei, introduced the "bouncing" movement of the staff, which is the trademark of this style. His grandson, Masami Chinen (1898-1976), later named the style after him. Masami Chinen also provided private lessons in kobudo at his home in Shuri.

The main weapon of this style is the "rokushaku-bo". Roku means six, and one shaku is 30.3 cm, so the bo has a length of 182 cm. The *bo* they use is unlike most kobudo styles, as it is not tapered but cylindrical.

Okinawan kobudo originates from five major kobudo systems: (1) Honshin-ryu kobudo, (2) Uhuchiku kobudo, (3) Ryukyu kobudo, (4) Matayoshi kobudo, and (5) Yamanni-Chinen-ryu kobudo. Yamanni-ryu stands out in this group as the most graceful and elegant.

This style is described as one of the most dynamic among Okinawan weapon styles because of its distinctive wide and flowing strikes, in stark contrast to the short movements of other weapon styles from Okinawa. However, most current Okinawa bojutsu styles have their origins in the Yamanni ryu style.

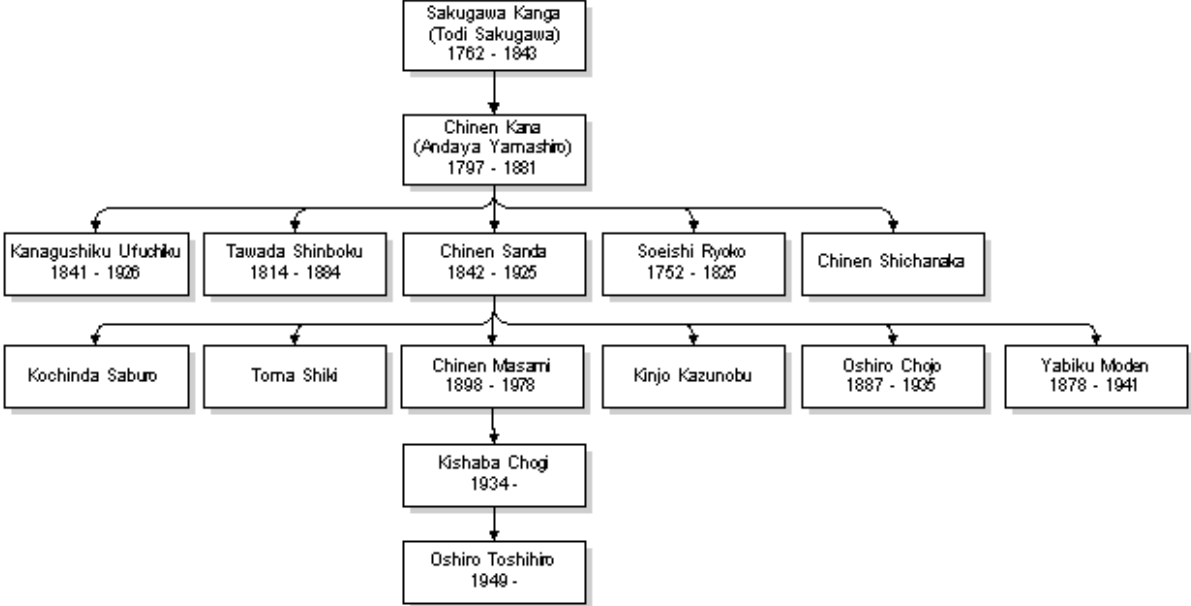
Yamanni-ryū techniques include fast strikes, and at times, lateral strikes to achieve sharp stops. It is said that Chinen had calluses on his left side due to constant daily practice. His heavy staff would noticeably vibrate during short pauses between consecutive strikes.

Yamanni-ryū includes, among other things, rapid figure-eight blocking, high thrusts, and strikes aimed at attackers on horseback. Hip rotations are used to enhance the power of the *bo*.



When Chinen gave a spear demonstration, he swung the weapon so quickly that the metal tip flew off and landed in a wooden beam just above a spectator.

Yamanni ryu lineage:





Japan 日本



Approximately 10,000 years ago, the Japanese archipelago took on its current shape. Shortly thereafter, the Jomon period began, lasting for about 8,000 years. The population consisted of hunters and gatherers. Gradually, they formed small settlements and began to organize their lives in a communal manner. They also began to use pottery.

Around 300 BCE, during the Yayoi period, rice cultivation reached Japan from the Eurasian continent, and settlements grew larger.

It is said that Japan took its first steps toward becoming a true nation during the Yamato period, which began at the end of the third century BCE. During this period, the ancestors of the current emperor brought several small states under one authority from their region, now known as the prefectures of Nara and Osaka.