



**Kissaki-Kai
Karate-Do**

Newsletter

January 2025

***TIME TO RE-EVALUATE!
FUNAKOSHI SENSEI
SAINT OR SINNER?***

OK - so when is the last time you saw such a throwing technique in Shotokan?

I'm willing to bet not often - if not at all!

There are good reasons why this is so, and most (not all) stem from the actions of Master Funakoshi following his introduction of Okinawan Karate onto the Japanese mainland.

For many years Kissaki-Kai has been underlining the impotence of modern Japanese-style sport Karate as practical defensive combat, as compared with the older Okinawan form. This is largely due to the actions of Funakoshi sensei in removing all the techniques which may have been encroaching upon the newly-emerging art of Judo, introduced by Funakoshi's sponsor and supporter, Jigaro Kano sensei.

This alteration of a martial art into one where Form (appearance) is placed above Function (effectiveness) completely removed from this new Karate the vast majority of the very techniques which made it such a formidable defensive system!

What was removed, or considerably devalued? Major throwing techniques, Strangling and Choking techniques, Joint-locking techniques, Vital-point striking and so on. In effect, all the close-range skills needed in real defensive situations!

Why? Because to Funakoshi, it didn't matter, as the philosophical aspects assumed the major importance in training. The secret corollary to this, was that this also removed most of the techniques which might have been in competition with

those emphasized in his mentor's new art of Judo. Thus preventing any adverse reactions from such an important figure.

So, now you know why you will never have seen many examples of the now-banned techniques in modern Shotokan, for instance!

Now consider, for a moment, what effect this had on the training in Kata.

Initially taught to an individual or very small numbers of students, with each Kata selected to suit the particular student, it now became taught by numbers to large bodies of students, and the individual attention to each student removed in favour of regimented movement with no consideration paid to the function of each move, because how it looked had become much more important.

I'm sure you can see that when over a number of years no-one - certainly not the original respected sensei in Japan ever learned the original function when asked by students today to



explain exactly what the move 'meant' and against what type of attack. These sensei were forced to reverse-engineer the waza, and dream up examples which anyone could see would - in reality - prove disastrous!

My question to all dedicated followers of the post-Funakoshi sports karate, denuded of throwing techniques, Kyusho-Waza, chokes, Kansetsu-Waza and the like, was very simple: 'How do you think Kata were originally developed?'

A real 'Chicken and Egg' question!

Do you think various sensei invented techniques 'out of the air' (for example: Shuto Uke) and then put them in a set formal sequence and left it to followers to reverse-engineer possible applications? (i.e. a variety of occasions wherein the waza would be a useful defense)?

In my opinion, this way madness lies!

This opens the path to every sensei - good, bad, indifferent - crazy - foisting his own ideas on believing students!

The huge problem is actually two-fold.

First - we see in Funakoshi sensei's desire to appease any potential problems with his sponsor Kano sensei in not including competing techniques with Judo. This means a huge number of realistic and effective defensive techniques were not trained at all, and the 'raison d'être' behind training in this new art shifted completely away from combat effectiveness to a striking-based dynamic, but safe - sport. The aim now was self-development, not self-defense!

This led, inevitably, into promoting this sport-karate as actually a modern representation of the original, powerfully effective, defensive karate. Which - with all the close-range techniques now omitted - it patently was (is) not!



3 examples of Manji Gamae - two patently useless, and one entirely functional!

The 2nd major problem lies in the preponderance of so many sensei demonstrating the idea of the 'meaning' of waza in the Kata as examples of how effective these are in defensive situations!

Thus leading to totally unrealistic attack scenarios with long ranges and only one punch at a time!

This ensures that both the sensei and student will be successful. Naturally, the defenses will not include the multiplicity of close-range fighting skills now not taught to students.

This second major problem also comes with an inherent built-in disadvantage in that by not teaching the original art, the 'Rules of Combat' - the underlying concepts of defeating an enemy - are simply not taught either! Double Whammy!

This means that even if the modern sensei wishes to show effective defenses, he (she) is not in a position to do so, as the variety of possibilities is now hugely less than if the original uses of many of the waza was still practiced and understood.

To someone with only a hammer - everything looks like a nail!



Tekki Kata: some sensei teach it as a flow-drill with no acknowledgement of its proven combat effectiveness!

Which leads back to the 'Rules of Combat.'

Throughout history, from the c.5th Century BCE 'The Art of War' by Sun Tzu, to modern Military Combat Manuals, the study of - simply put - the most effectual ways to deliver effective combat-winning techniques, has been globally accepted as paramount to the training of all concerned with real combat!

Some 50 or more years ago, realising that simply going on about the lack of genuine, workable tactics and strategies employed by the vast majority of the newly emerging Bunkai Experts, was getting us nowhere, I began an exhaustive research into military and civilian tactics (historical and contemporary) in the areas of both lethal (Military) and self-defence (Body Guarding, Police Control and Arrest etc.).

I was well-suited to the task, being at the time in the midst of deep research into the analysis and translation of Old Norse Saga for my PhD. - thus having some skills in research procedure.

This in depth study was always posited on the concept of applying such results, where appropriate, to the analysis of Kata waza (Bunkai). This was concurrent with my researches into Acupuncture (history and efficacy) and also Kyusho Jutsu - the employment of vulnerable point striking and manipulation, to help towards the defeat of an aggressor.



Rules of Combat DVD or USB

To cut a long story short; after many years of research, testing and feedback from such as the instructors and officers at Police Academy (where I taught special seminars for training the instructors) for some 12 years or more (receiving 2 Police Academy citations for assisting the safety and protection of officers) I developed and published the first edition of 'Rules of Combat' with an accompanying double DVD.

Right from the start, I noticed a number of suddenly-emerging 'experts' in the field! Did this annoy me? Well, when it was downright plagiarism, yes it did! But, if a nod of recognition were given (not often) and especially if the instructor got it right, then - fair enough - knowledge, after all, is universal and, rightly taught, could only be to the benefit of the students!

I could go on for hours on this topic, but I understand that by now your desire for coffee or a Beer must be rampant!

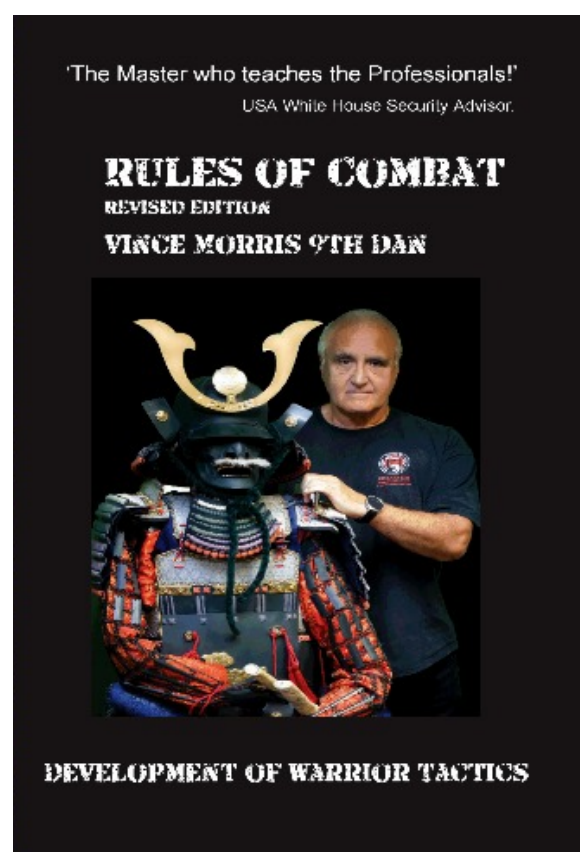
So, back to the main question, what came first?

My view? Originally, in Okinawa, with such small groups of students for any sensei, the purpose of any waza must surely have been taught alongside the acquisition of the skill to use it!

If we look, for instance, at Master Sokon 'Bushi' (Warrior) Matsumura born 1797, he only ever taught very small numbers of (eventually influential) students, and, given his position as chief bodyguard to 3 Kings of Okinawa, it is inconceivable that he taught anything not pragmatically useful!

Naturally, this meant that different sensei might derive different meanings (uses) of each technique, but, by the 'In your face' training, those which were deemed not effective would be rejected, whilst those which worked were accepted and made use of. Personally, my maxim throughout my training and teaching is: 'Try it on me!' I'm pretty sure that any former, old style sensei would have the same attitude.

With sensei often travelling away from their Dojo, it became useful to string some of these techniques together, thus Kata were created. Note: naturally each sensei would originally be devising Kata which played to his strengths, and those of his students: body shape, mobility, size etc. Thus different Kata emerged and were perpetuated by each sensei's students.



None of these adaptations in themselves were greatly significant, because all were taught following their original intention i.e. effective defensive waza.

All this changed when Funakoshi sensei sold out this original concept of combat efficiency in favour of creating his new Karate wherein the stated purpose was to create a method of transcending the ego and creating harmony and peacefulness. Form over Function!

The big 'take away' from this, however, is that in modern Karate, not only is the use of Kata a triumph of 'Form over Function' but that in effect, only the striking elements of karate are initially considered! (Hammer = Nail). Plus, even if today some sensei accept that maybe in one instance a throw would be the better response, how well can

they teach it? Even more so if they in fact ever realise that what they are looking at is a choke or strangle, not some strange 'Ready' stance?

The majority of Japanese based sport karate instructors are very talented. Fast, skillful, powerful, championship medalists and so on, they produce talented students in their image. But - don't fool the students by pretending that the obviously unworkable 'Bunkai' from the Kata is anywhere near as effective as those employed by adherents to the old inclusive karate, built upon and applying the 'Rules of Combat!.

A brief insight into the effect of Funakoshi's (watered down) teaching of Naihanchi (Tekki) can be gleaned from a comment by Motobu Naoki: 'Motobu Chōki on the other hand noted that Matsumura Sensei has criticized Itosu Sensei's Naihanchi and that Matsumura Sensei has stated that: **"When**

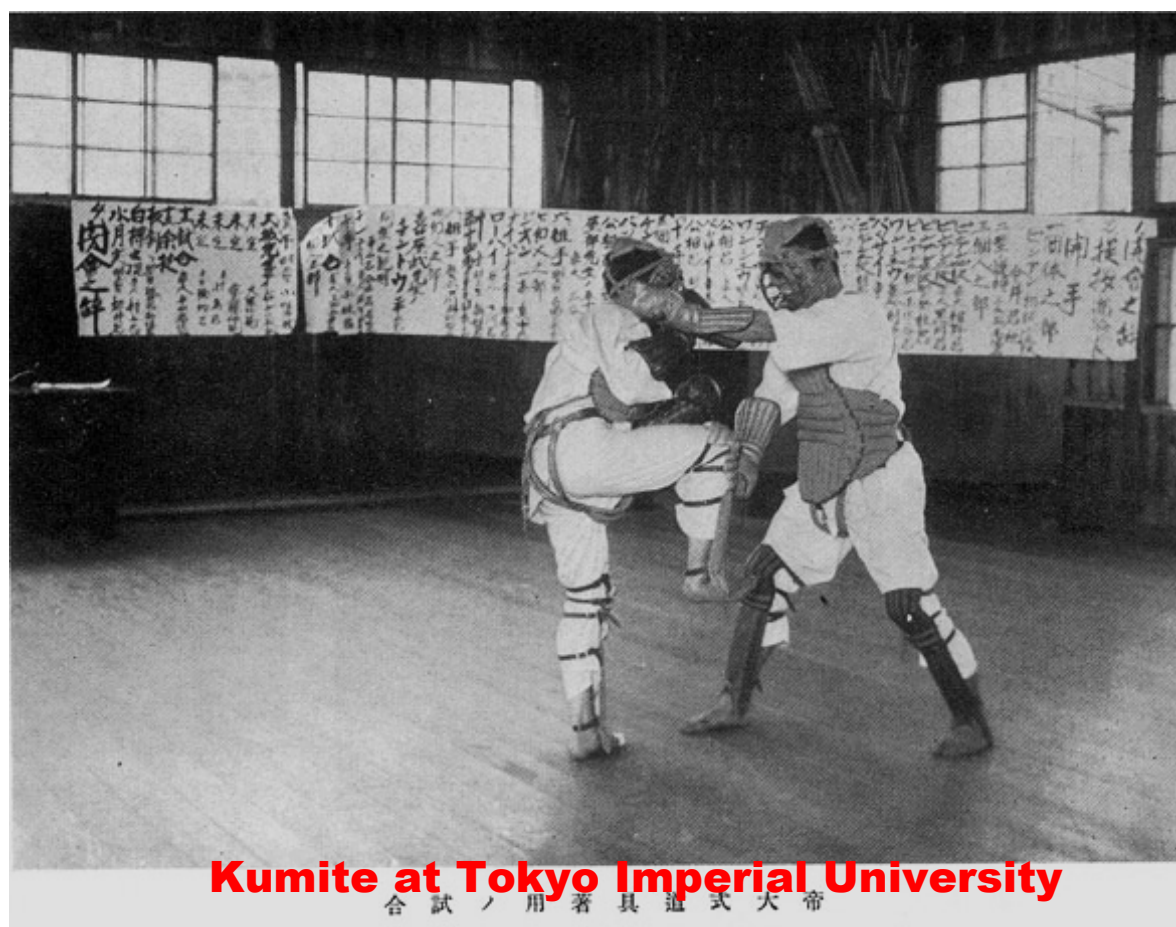
used in an actual confrontation (fight), Itosu's small-turtle-stance is extremely dangerous and one would be immediately defeated in it.!

A short comment from Master Choshin Chibana (1885-1969) the originator of Shorin-Ryu style, succinctly summarizes the original concepts of Kata:

'We must avoid treating karate as a sport. Your fingers and toes must be like arrows, your arms must be like iron. If you kick, try to kick the enemy dead. If you punch, punch to kill. This is the spirit you need to progress in karate.'



Master Choshin Chibana



Kumite at Tokyo Imperial University
合試ノ用著具道式大帝

Far away from the modern concept of dramatic presentation and drama!

Just to point out that not all students in the 'new' form of karate were happy with the emasculation of this style of karate can be seen in this early photo of some defying the ban on Kumite and donning rudimentary protective equipment to bring back a sense of reality to the training.

I recall reading that in one University Dojo when Funakoshi caught the students engaging in free-style kumite he turned around and walked out!

Which sort of brings me back to Tekki (Naihanchi) Kata.

I have said before that - given the importance placed upon it by the bodyguard to three Okinawa Kings, for me at least I interpret the techniques as fast and effective answers to an attack on a Principal (here a King) which absolutely have to be executed in a manner that does not leave the Principal open and endangered by a further attack by accomplices!

I have been researching and teaching Tekki Kata since way back in the 1980s, both on general seminars and later as part of my Police Defensive Tactics courses at various Police Academies. Why? Because at close range there is no more effective collections of techniques which so rapidly dispose of dangerous attackers! The King's bodyguards were expected to deal with attackers wielding a variety of weapons, and even sometimes empty-handed.

Plus, there is also the embusen to consider, the 'pattern' of the Kata.

Given that the defender is situated in front of the Principal, it is obvious that he cannot - as in the majority of other Kata, just go off the spot to engage the attackers, thus leaving the target exposed. Therefore, the embusen is restricted to short linear movements, which keep the target protected.

This Kata brilliantly accomplishes this requirement, and has the concomitant feature that each and every technique has to be extremely fast, and immediately brutally effective, ensuring the assailant will be in no position to continue to press the attack.

Remember, I have had long experience of teaching officers to prevent their firearms being seized by

suspects and the techniques have proved to be remarkably effective! (In 2005 Over a six-week period, a handful of officers from Rhode Island to Illinois had their guns taken from them after they allegedly were overpowered by suspects or inmates. In each case, the ending was deadly. (*Police 1 publication*))

It must be said, that in general the training that most Cops receive in how to defend against attempts to grab their weapons is very effective - but shit happens!

OK. So how does this concern you, who are probably not a Police Officer, although you may be involved in some door-work or security, or simply aware of the credible dangers in some Bars even in some city areas? Truth is, nowhere is really safe today, and the defensive skills acquired from original karate training, and particularly from mastering the techniques with the Tekki Kata, will always provide functional effective defenses to a wide variety of attacks!



Sensei Vince and Master Choki Motobu teaching same opening move in Tekki

Ok, time to draw this article to an end. But I want to leave you with a pertinent comment.:

I I have been involved in the teaching of Law Enforcement, Special Anti-Terrorist Squads, US White House Security Specialists, Police Bodyguard Squads and more. I have even been awarded two Police Academy Citations for my work. Do you think I would put my reputation behind stuff that won't work?

All the techniques, including the weapons (firearms and bladed weapons) defense techniques are absolutely pressure-tested by myself and sensei Janssens. With the gun defense training, for example, we even use weapons which fire projectiles - of course we wear head and body protective equipment, but we are so determined that what we teach is effective if trained correctly! This latter part is up to you!

Of course, the majority of you will (hopefully) never need the powerful defensive techniques that we teach to these special groups, but it is an uncertain world, and for all students I think it is time to stop relying on explanations from sports specialists who have no idea of the dangerous reality of the streets. Sport Karate has many useful elements, and has cross-overs, such as teaching timing, movement, determination and so on. Ask, however, how this helps a woman fight off a would-be rapist or murderer? Which aspects of the sports training can help here? It can't.

The Okinawan original Karate - before being sold-out by Funakoshi - contained all the waza to combat the dangers of the streets. Time to bring it back, and Kissaki-Kai is proud to do so!

Kissaki-Kai Karate-Do
Germany



Effective Bunkai for Self Defence

Vince Morris, 9. Dan

Guy Janssens, 7. Dan

14th/15th of June 2025

Seminar:

Kissaki-Kai is dedicated towards upholding the original values and principles of the martial arts and aims to make Karate what it originally was: An effective self-defence system. This seminar will examine the bunkai of the Kata Tekki Shodan/Naihanchi.

Location:

BSG Commerzbank Frankfurt
Schaumainkai 65
60596 Frankfurt am Main

Schedule:

Saturday: 10:00 – 15:00
Sunday: 10:00 – 12:00

Seminar fees:

Saturday €50.- / Sunday 40.- €
both days 75.- €

Kissaki-Kai Members 40.- € / 35.- €
Kissaki-Kai Members 65.- €

Registration:

The number of participants is limited to 40 people. We therefore ask for prior registration and transfer of the seminar fee.

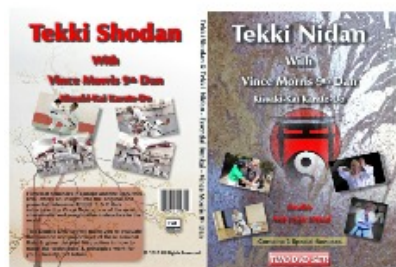
Registration form: <https://forms.gle/w2Hn13oqudeL5RCy7>
Or scan this QR-Code:



Any Questions?:

Peter Russell - peter.russell@commerzbank.com
Tel.: +49 171 111 02974

The organiser assumes no liability for personal injury or damage to property.



BSG COMMERZBANK
FRANKFURT/MAIN

BUNKAI-SELF DEFENCE SEMINAR

JISHIN-KATSU DOJO
KISSAKI-KAI BELGIUM



Saturday 24 May 2025

from 10:00 till 15:00
with 45 min break

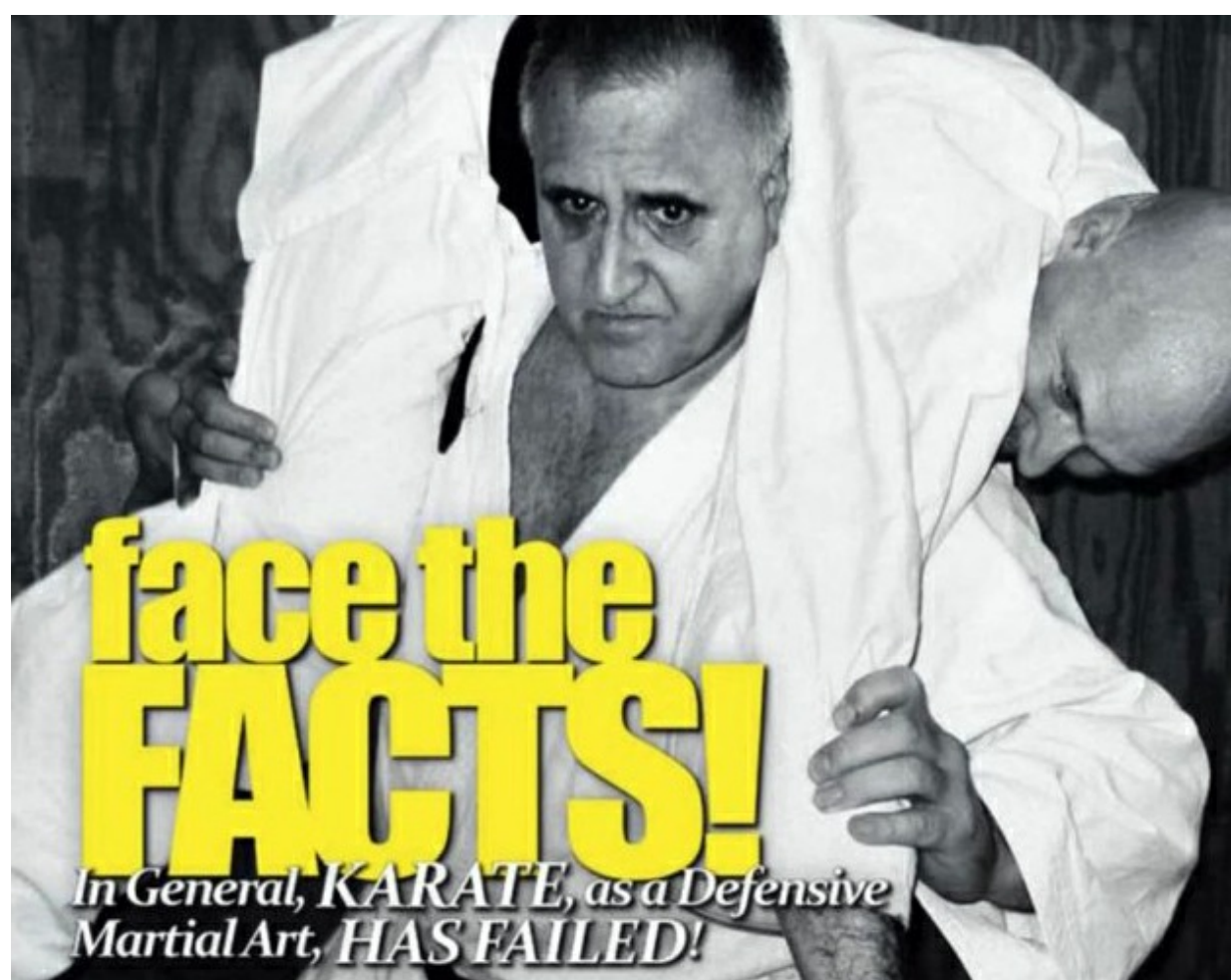
Location: Kleistraat 202-204
2630 Aartselaar

Price: 25 euro
to be paid upon
registration.

registrations by email: Christoffdeconinck@gmail.com
places limited!!

Further Information on all the many Books, DVDs and USBs is available on the main website:
www.kissakikarate.com Do make full use of these invaluable assets to real understanding!
You can also check on forthcoming seminars, and other information about Kissaki-Kai.
Also, you can keep in touch via my Facebook Page - Vince Morris.

We would love to see you on the seminars, when you can judge for yourselves the effectiveness of Kissaki-Kai training!



A US White House security consultant called sensei Vince: 'The Master who teaches the Professionals!'