

Sensei Pervez Mistry 8th Dan Goju Ryu being felicitated at the Martial Arts Debate Forum held at the American School of Bombay on 12th October 2019.



**TALK ON MARTIAL ARTS & SPIRITUALITY
ON SATURDAY 12 10 2019
FROM 4:30pm TO 8:00pm
AT
ABS (BKC). MUMBAI.**

This is a transcript of the talk I gave to an august audience of over 150 people at the above venue.

“I would first and foremost, commend and thank my student, who is a Sensei in his own right Sensei D.B Rai(Chief Security Officer of ABS alongwith Mr. Craig Johnson the Principal of ABS, and Mr. Ravi Wazir, the Master of Ceremonies for this talk and debate. These and Sensei D. B. Rai’s team are the people who have made this “*Niyuddhi Sabha*” possible.

I took this opportunity to present Mr. Craig Johnson & Mr. Ravi Wazir with copies of my book “SANCHIN Three Battles” – *The Anatomy and Physiology of Sanchin Kata*.

“Whenever the word Martial is mentioned it brings to our mind, which is more conditioned to its western meaning which according to the Oxford Dictionary is 1: **Martial** : Relating to Fighting or War, and 2. The word **Spirit** relates to: “The non-physical part of a person which is the seat of emotions and character; *we seek a harmony between body and spirit*.

While on the other hand its Japanese equivalent which is 3. **Budo** : means “**Chivalry**” which is the term that the famous Japanese author “**Inazo Nitobe**” refers to as his interpretation to the meaning of Martial, as his opening line in his book “**BUSHIDO The Soul of Japan**” which I will read to you states:

“Chivalry(his interpretation of MARTIAL) is a flower no less indigenous to the soil than its emblem, the cherry blossom; nor is it a dried up specimen of an antique virtue preserved in the herbarium of our history”. It is still a living object of power and beauty among us; and if it assumes no tangible shape or form, it not the less scents the moral atmosphere, and makes us aware that we are still under its potent spell”.

According to historians, the martial concept originated both in the West and in the East through the evolvement of “**Feudalism**” which became the engine of the birth of the fighting warriors that in the west were called

in old English *cniht* (Knecht, Knight) similar to the word “*Bu-shi*” (*Fighting Knights*) and which later were called “**SAMURAI**”, or Warrior.

There are very many martial arts today, but all are not in any way linked to spirituality, for example boxing, wrestling, fencing, Western Archery (Japanese Archery or “**KYUDO**” is well linked to the warrior spirit).

Eastern martial arts are mostly linked to concepts of spirituality. For example; one of the oldest Martial Art in the World is “**KALARIPAYATTU**”, and in every guru Kul or dojo, there is a small shrine of “**HANUMAN**” . In **Muay Thai competitions** the Martial Art of Thailand, a ritualized form (KATA) is performed before the bout, and is termed as “**WAI KHRU RAM**” - **WAI** which is a way of the fighters to show respect to each other by putting their hands together as in prayer. **KHRU** means Teacher, while **RAM** could refer to the Hindu God **RAM** or may also refer to dance in the old Thai Traditional style.

Jujitsu and Judo are not linked to spirituality, except in the sense of mutual respect and moral behavior, but nearly all **Karate-do** dojos will have a shrine at the most respected area of the dojo called “**Henko**” or “**Shinzen**”.

In fact in most ‘**Goju Ryu**’ dojos there is either a picture or wooden sculpture of “**BUSUGANASHI**” or the Karate-do Deity.

“Religion, war and glory were the three soul of a perfect Christian knight” says Lamartine, a French writer, poet and politician.

In Japan it began with Buddhism, and in particular Zen Buddhism, as the warrior class found that this type of meditation, could focus their consciousness which helped them control their emotions even in a fight or on the battlefield.

A foremost teacher of “**laido**”, (or the art of the fast draw in Japanese swordsmanship),(*explain what laido is*) when he saw his student master the utmost of his art, told him “ Beyond this my instruction must give way to **Zen** teaching”. Deep Yogic meditation is called **Dhyana**, and **Zen** is its Japanese equivalent.

In Traditional Martial Arts, the emphasis is mostly on two factors, a high level of fitness probably similar or very close to an Olympic athlete, and self-defense. In Karate-do, there is a very famous saying “**Karate ni sente nashi**” or “*there is no first attack in Karate-do*”. So we come to a paradox – why learn how to fight if you are never going to use it!

As Gandhiji said “ The strongest weapon in any armory is Non-Violence”.

Through the rigors of constant training where the body is put through pain, fatigue, and endurance, it is the mind that becomes indomitable, and the will to never give up becomes a doctrine that the practitioner lives by. At this stage the Martial Art that one studies ceases to be a Martial Art and instead becomes a “**Way of Life**”.

After many years of study, and daily practice, especially of the **Katas**, their inherent secrets begin to percolate into the sub-conscious of the practitioner, where his awareness expands into the realms beyond the physical. We have all heard of “**bio-feedback**” techniques, and through Karate one can achieve this feat, of controlling the involuntary actions in the body. We have also heard of an inherent force that is prevalent in all of us but only possible through years of constant training. In Hindi it's called “**Prana**”, in China it's **Chi** and in Japan it's called **Ki**.

I then preceded and demonstrated a bio feedback technique by stopping my pulse. I requested Mr. Ravi Wazir to feel my pulse and when he told me he could, I commenced a certain breathing technique coupled with muscular tension, and stopped my pulse for a little over 40 seconds.

I then demonstrated the power of **KI**. For this I requested two members of the audience who then came over. I also requested my student and one of the speakers Mr. Devan Shah (Master of Kinesiology USA) on the dais. I then requested him to feel the contraction in my right arm as one of the volunteers to bend my right arm by holding my wrist and elbow joint and put his full strength into it. I tried resisting by using muscular resistance, but as my opponent was far bigger than me and obviously into weight training, he did manage to bend my arm. I asked Devan if he felt my muscular resistance and he affirmed the same.

I then relaxed and began a particular breathing sequence, and when I was ready I asked both the volunteers to hold my wrist and elbow and put all their strength into bending my arm. I also requested Both Devan and Ravi to feel if there was any muscular contraction either in my Biceps or triceps, and gave the go ahead to bend my arm. In short they were unable to do so in spite of the fact that my arm was totally relaxed, which was affirmed by both Devan and Ravi. This is the power of **KI**.

In explanation I use the power of Sanchin breathing and imagine my brain as being the “**ON/OFF**” switch and my “**TANDEN**” as being a powerful compressor and my arm a limp hose pipe. With Sanchin breathing I activate the ON switch and push the power from my tanden

into my arm which now becomes as rigid as a bar of steel without any external muscular involvement.

Most people and even those who regularly practice Sanchin Kata regularly are completely unaware of the hidden secrets in the body and arm actions. In our language these secret actions are called **“MUDRAS”**.

In fact in Kata **SANCHIN** all the actions are in actual fact **“MUDRAS”**. I then proceeded to read a small excerpt from my book **“SANCHIN Three Battles, The Anatomy and philosophy of Sanchin Kata. (Page 2 paras 1 to 4).**

In most philosophies and religions the ultimate aim of human kind is to reach that level or state called “enlightenment” or salvation, in English, which comes from the Sanskrit word Nirvana, while in China its termed as Pinyin and in Japanese as Nehan or Satori. Hence Christianity is filled with its Saints, and Buddhism with its Buddha’s, and in India it’s the Yogi’s who have attained Samadhi.

Thus the paths are many from which to choose, but they all lead to the unification of mind body and spirit, which ultimately is what Martial Arts is all about.

I trust and hope that you have gained a greater insight into what the Martial Arts in general and Karate-do in particular can do for you or in brief, open your full potential in body and mind to then enable you to embrace your spirit in totality.