

Filipino Martial Arts

Digest

Dedicated to the Filipino Martial Arts and the Culture of the Philippines

Special Edition
2010

Amara Arkanis

Filipino Martial Arts Education
Created by Punong Mataw-guro Luis Rafael C. Lledo



FMA Digest

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Contents

Publishers Desk

Amara Arkanis: A System of Systems	2
The Founder of Amara Arkanis	
Punong Mataw-guro Luis Rafael C. Lledo	4
Filipino Martial Arts Education	6
Comparison of Teaching Approach	7
Punong Mataw-guro Lledo Migration to the United States	9
Abecedario or Abakada	11
Filipino Martial Arts Education Requirements	15
Samahan ng mga Mataw-guro	20

The FMA Digest is published quarterly. Each issue features practitioners of martial arts and other internal arts of the Philippines. Other features include historical, theoretical and technical articles; reflections, Filipino martial arts, healing arts and other related subjects.

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Publishers Desk

Kumusta

Filipino martial art is no longer a “secret” art of a privilege few or a special interest group. It is now open to anybody wanting to learn. It is in fact, practiced around the world, and is becoming a very popular and fastest spreading fighting art. Opening the standards of the Filipino martial arts is needed, to preserve the art. It is high time to develop a united, standard Filipino martial art education program, without undue reference to the name of the school or style.

There should be a standard program in the teaching curriculum of the Filipino Martial Arts Education, which must include a uniform mode of instruction.

Twenty-six years ago, in 1980, Luis Rafael C. Lledo, Jr., in his desire to bring back the original Mandirigma spirit to the fighting arts, established Amara Arkanis, a product of the continuous evolution of the fighting arts he has learned. Punong Mataw-guro Lledo trains his students in the basics of all four of these classical systems, (Kruzada, Sinawali, Redonda, and Abaniko). With knowledge of the classical system basics and training in sabakan (engagement), Amara Arkanis students can recognize the style of nearly any opponent.

Punong Mataw-guro Lledo, he decided to call his system Amara Arkanis Sistemang Praksiyon Filipino Martial Arts Education, combining all the empty hand, sword, and the stick techniques he learned from the other arts.

Punong Mataw-guro Lledo designed a martial arts education program for beginning students in the Filipino martial arts, so they will have a concrete foundation by going through a step-by-step learning of the fundamentals. As the student advances they will understand the underlying principles of the maneuvers they are executing.

What is Amara Arkanis as a Filipino Martial Arts Education? It is a course of study that encompasses the origin and history of the art, the philosophies that made the art part of the Filipino culture and the principles that govern each technique and maneuver.

Punong Mataw-guro Lledo explains in a “System of Systems,” which eventually, must be referred to simply as Filipino martial arts, the teacher is addressed as Mataw-guro. Mataw is a Filipino Muslim term (from Maguindanao) which in English means knowledgeable or someone who knows. Guro means Teacher. Taken together, Mataw-guro means Knowledgeable Teacher or Master Teacher. The Mataw-guro is a high level rank that is well above entry level for professional Filipino Martial Arts teachers.

One set of martial arts teachers is already moving in the direction of standardization and openness. These are the teachers who are endorsing the teaching of the Filipino martial art as an education (like physical education) rather than a style. They are designated as a Mataw-guro. In this Special Edition you will read about Punong Mataw-guro Lledo’s recognition of Mataw-guro’s and the principles behind the movement.

So it is hoped you will enjoy and understand Punong Mataw-guro Lledo concepts in the promotion of Filipino Martial Arts Education.

Maraming Salamat Po

The following tries to explain what it is like to be a student of Filipino Martial Arts Education with Punong Mataw Guro Lou Lledo. After the article you can read some of the basic concepts taught by Punong Mataw Guro Lledo and the common themes picked up by different students are clear along with individual differences. Just as in the rest of the world, simplicity and complexity coexist. One of the scientific lessons learned this century is that repeating the same relatively function over and over again actually generates what are apparently enormously complex results (chaos theory or the study of iterative functions).

This Course of Study, tested and Proven in the State Colleges and Universities Athletic Association Region IV (Southern Tagalog), is applicable to all styles and schools of the Filipino Fighting Arts. Even in the abbreviated form, this Course of Study will offer the beginner a step-by-step and methodical way of learning. Likewise, it will offer the advance practitioners a better understanding of the underlying principles of their own art.

This program of Filipino Fighting Arts Education was designed by Punong Mataw Guro Louelle Lledo, Jr, who holds a Masters Degree in Physical Education, a licensed Medical Technologist, a Captain in the Philippine Air Force Reserves, a Master in both Filipino and Japanese martial arts and the successor to the Bernarte Brokil Sistemang Praksiyon.

Amara Arkanis: A System of Systems - “Filipino Fighting Art of Education”

By: Phil Weathers

In all their emphasis on technology, modern military forces have rarely lost sight of at least some traditional martial arts. In some surprising ways, the martial arts maintain a focus on the modern military.

Over the last decade or two, the military has attempted to merge many formerly separate enterprises into a “system of systems. This is conceived of as a force multiplier much as the Germans used coordinated infantry, armor and air strikes to wage blitzkrieg. Older separate and uncoordinated

systems are often called “stove-pipes.”

Punong Mataw Guro Louelle Lledo has done the same thing for the Filipino martial arts. There are thousands of islands in the Philippines, and nearly everyone has its stovepipe martial art. Around the world in the past, martial arts and culture would vary a great deal over less than a hundred miles. After all, who might be the enemy if not people within a few days travel? It is hard to seize on quick opportunities from great distances. Secrets and differences

in approach in fighting could be a matter of life or death. Stovepipe martial arts systems were a strategic requirement.

Despite the historical proliferation of martial arts, we all have similar bodies which work much the same way. Some themes keep recurring over and over in the basics of most martial arts. Guro Louelle’s approach starts with the idea that all of the Filipino stick-fighting arts can be characterized by where they fit into four Filipino classical systems:

- **Kruzada** - *This is anatomically the most straightforward and one of the more physically powerful styles. It concentrates on cross-body diagonal strikes or slashes going either up into the opponent’s legs or down across the body.*
- **Sinawali** - *Sinawali means weaving. Basic techniques involve changing the direction from which discrete strikes are made. Sinawali is most effectively introduced as a double stick (or “doble baston”). Strikes can come from side, top, bottom, or on any diagonal. Sinawali techniques can be and are used with single stick (solo baston) fighting, but they are easiest to understand when introduced with double sticks.*
- **Redonda** - *Redonda harnesses the power of circular strikes. Where sinawali employs discrete strikes, redondo strikes are a continuous slashing circular flow Redondo is often used to administer a fight-ending blow.*
- **Abaniko** - *Abaniko is semi-circular or fan shaped striking. Twisting of the wrist and forearm produce these blows. They are used in mid to close range often to set the opponent up for a killing blow. These strikes give up a bit of power for speed and strategic advantage. Abaniko can be like a stick-fighting analogue of some close range hand-to-hand styles.*

Punong Mataw Guro Lledo trains his students in the basics of all four of these classical systems. With knowledge of the classical system basics and training in saba-kan (engagement), Amara Arkanis students can recognize the style of nearly any opponent and counter it. This program is the first portion of training in Punong Mataw Guro Lledo's personal Amara Arkanis

style. This is the style that is a system of Filipino martial arts systems.

Punong Mataw Guro Lledo estimates that many students can complete their study of the classic systems in as little as two years.

Context control is one advantage of a system of systems. If the opponent cannot see outside of his stovepipe, he is dangerously

handicapped. Calling Amara Arkanis a system of systems is accurate in many ways. It also is a sign of respect to the classical systems. They are among its necessary components. Nonetheless, it would not be desirable to call Amara Arkanis "a stovepipe of stovepipes."

Punong Mataw Guro Lledo likes to call his approach Filipino Martial Arts Education."

The Founder of Amara Arkanis and How It Pertains to the Filipino Martial Arts Education Created by Punong Mataw-guro Luis Rafael C. Lledo

By: Louelle Lledo as told to Emmanuel ES Querubin

Amara Arkanis is a complete martial art. On the surface it looks like there are two different arts- an unarmed art using the hands and the feet and an armed art using sticks, knives, and other alternative weapons.

But a close examination will reveal that it is one and the same complete martial art. All the techniques may be executed with or without any weapon. The fact is, weapons such as sticks or knives are regarded as an extension of the hand.

For educational and learning purposes, the unarmed techniques and the armed techniques are presented separately so a better understanding of the art is achieved. The student, however, must always remember that all and every technique, particularly hand techniques, may be executed with or without weapons.

Twenty-six years ago, in 1980, Luis Rafael C. Lledo, Jr., in his desire to bring back the original mandirigma spirit to the fighting arts, established Amara Arkanis, a product of the continuous evolution of the fighting arts he has learned.

When Lledo Founded the Amara Arkanis style of Filipino fighting arts, he held the rank of Ika-Amin Na Antas Sagisag Na Itim (6th degree Black Belt), and the title of Punong Guro (head instructor) in the Filipino fighting arts and in Japanese Karate.

The first seeds of Amara Arkanis were born in 1959 in

Zamboanga City on the island of Mindanao, in Southern Philippines. Lledo was first introduced to the rudiments of the fighting arts by his grandfather, his father and his uncles.

His great grandfather, Antonio Marquez Alvarez, a descendant of the Spanish conquistadors, taught him the European style of fencing. His father, Luis Lledo, Sr., then an intelligence officer of the Philippine Air Force, taught him the military, albeit dirty style of hand-to-hand combat. At an early age, Lledo also became an expert in combat shooting, both with rifles and handguns. After school, Lledo, apprenticed in a boxing gym operated by his uncles Ramon and Antonio Lledo, local boxing promoters and champions of Zamboanga City, where he learned the manly art of boxing.

Lledo, although not of royal heritage, but nonetheless from an influential family, was also schooled in the secret fighting arts of Kuntawan and Silat. He became adept in the arts of Kuntawan and Silat. At the same time, Lledo took up Karate under Joe David of the Kyokushinkai style of Karate and was awarded his 1st Degree Black Belt as he celebrated his 18th birthday.

In his desire to learn more about the fighting arts and to pursue a degree in Medical technology, he went to Manila and trained further in the different arts and



Punong Mataw-guro Luis Rafael C. Lledo

styles of fighting. He sought the instructions from the masters.

Due to his diligence and skills in the fighting arts, he was promoted to the 4th Degree Black Belt in Karate in 1972. It was then that he became acquainted with Remy Presas, who was in the initial stages of establishing the Modern Arnis Federation of the Philippines.

In 1974 Lledo was named head referee during the International Invitational Karate Championships, hosted by the Philippine Karate Association, the ruling body of Karate in the Philippines, of which Remy Presas was also an official.

Lledo trained directly with Kali Grandmasters Tatang Illustisimo and Porfirio Lanada. He also trained and received a Master's

Certificate in Brokil (the Pampanga School of Arnis) from Grandmaster Delfin Bernarte.

Masters of Arnis de Mano found a way to treat and temper a type of hardwood known as bahi, making it tough and strong as steel. It was a popular belief that the master imbues the bahi with his spirit, personality and his anting-anting (amulet). This bahi and anting-anting were passed on to the successor in a highly secret ritual just prior to the master's demise. It is said that unless the anting-anting is passed on to the successor, the master's final moment will be agonizingly long in coming. It was also rumored that Bernarte's bahi and anting-anting were passed on to Lledo, something that Lledo neither denies nor confirms.

He trained in Tai Chi Chuan under Ed Cayetano. Fortunato Sevilla and Francisco Alvina were Lledo's instructors in Judo and Ju-jitsu. He learned the concepts of Korean Tang Soo Doo and Japanese Goju-ryu Karate from Grandmasters Hwang Kee and Gogen Yamaguchi respectively. Lledo learned Sikaran, various Japanese styles of unarmed combat and Soong Leong Kwan (Double Dragon School), King Fu, from Emmanuel Querubin, who learned it from Chan Keng Wan, the last living Master of Soong Leong, Kwan.

Lledo's associates and training partners, particularly Inocencio Glaraga of the Kalaki School of Kali, Yaming and Arnis, Yoli Romo of the Philippine Pamantukan Penjakali Stick Boxing Society and Rodel "Smoking Sticks" Dagooc of Modern Arnis Philippines, further enriched his experience with other systems of fighting.

In 1975, Lledo was accredited as an international referee by the World Union of Karate-do Organizations. (WUKO), the world ruling body in Karate and was called upon to officiate in the Third World Karate Championships held at Long Beach, California.

While in Long Beach, Lledo became closely associated with Ed Parker, father of American Kempo. Parker played host to Lledo and other officials of the Philippine National Karate Team, whom he chauffeured around in the Cadillac given by Elvis Presley.

Parker became an honorary member of the Philippine National Karate Team and was always present during the training sessions of the Philippine Karate Team. The Philippine team placed fourth in the team competition in the 3rd World Karate Championships.

The exchange of information and techniques with the various martial arts leaders and practitioners during his foreign travels and in their visits to the Philippines further enriched his understanding and experience in the fighting arts.

In 1980, Lledo established an eclectic system of fighting geared towards an individual's psychological and physiological makeup. It is not a new combative art. Rather, it is a further evolution of the various martial arts that Lledo trained and learned.

Lledo's ultimate goal in establishing the system is to develop a person's character through the rigid and strict discipline required in training in the fighting arts. To give the system his personal touch and to reaffirm its ultimate goal, Lledo name the art Amara Arkanis.

When Lledo formalized the curriculum of Amara Arkanis, he called on his experience both as a martial artist and a physical education teacher. He knew that in order for the art to flourish and expand, the traditional way of teaching must give way to the modern way of propagation.

Lledo's expertise in teaching the fighting arts was recognized when he was appointed chief defensive tactics instructor of the Headquarters, Philippine Integrated National Police Training Command, and National Capital Regional Training Center at Fort Bonifacio in Metro Manila. He later was made chief unarmed combat instructor of the National Bureau of Investigation (the Philippine version of the FBI). He also headed a team of security agents for then Mayor Bagatsing of the City of Manila, and trained the Civil Intelligence and Security Unit of the City of Manila in the combative arts. The State Colleges and Universities Athletic Association (SCUAA) voted Lledo president of the SCUAA Martial Arts Organization.

Lledo holds a rank of captain in the Philippine Air Force Reserves. He travels around the Philippines giving instructions and seminars in the Amara Arkanis School of the Filipino Fighting Art. He is also Chief Combat Instructor of the 1st Air Division and the 304th Security Squadron of the Philippine Air Force.

On May 8, 2002, Lledo was appointed Regional Commissioner (SCUAA, Region IV) by the International Modern Arnis Federation of the Philippines, which was founded by Grandmaster Remy Presas.

Shortly thereafter, Lledo

migrated to the United States carrying with him the title of Ambassador Plenipotentiary of the Department of Tourism's Office of Philippine Indigenous Fighting Arts.

In January 2003, Lledo was bestowed the Grandmaster of the Year Award of the Filipino Fighting Arts, by the Action Martial Arts Magazine published on the east coast.

In December 2005, Lledo was sworn in by Senator Lito Lapid, Chairman of the Philippine Senate Committee on Sports as National Coordinator of the Philippine Indigenous Games, Sports and Arts and the International Modern Arnis Federation of the Philippines (PIGSAI-IMAFP) for

New Jersey, USA.

Filipino Martial Arts Education

To understand what Filipino martial arts Education is all about, it is important, first to know who Louelle Lledo is, and second to know his motives and intentions in calling his approach to teaching, Filipino martial arts Education.

What is Armara Arkanis Sistemang Praksiyon? Amara is the acronym for ama (father, male or positive) and mara (mother, female or negative). Arkanis, on the other hand means an art combining empty hands (ka for kamao) and stick fighting (ar-nis). Sistemang Praksiyon is the philosophy involved in the Bernarte Bokil system to differentiate it from the

other Brokil systems. Brokil is the term for stick fighting in the province of Pampanga. Some Brokil systems are simply called sinawali. Delfin Bernarte calls his art Brokil, and his system "Sistemang Praksiyon," which came from his favorite expression, "praksiyon-praksiyon lang." This term probably comes from the fact that his blows only takes a fraction of a time to deliver. When mastership of the system was passed on to Louelle Lledo, he decided to call his system Amara Arkanis Sistemang Praksiyon Filipino Martial Arts Education, combining all the empty hand, sword, and the stick techniques he learned from the other arts.

He designed a martial arts education program for:

- Beginners in the Filipino martial arts, so they will have a concrete foundation by going through a step-by-step learning of the fundamentals.
- Advance students who did not undergo this type of training, so they will understand the underlying principles of the maneuvers they are executing.
- Prospective teachers so they can better organize a more systematized lesson plan or course of study, for a more effective and efficient teaching and learning of the Filipino martial art.

The term Filipino martial arts Education is neither an original term nor concept. The first known school where the Filipino martial arts taught were called Bothoan (Butuan), as mentioned in the chronicles of Magellan's conquest of the Philippines.

According to the book, "Mga Karunungan sa Larong Arnis," written by Placido Yambao, published more than 50 years ago:

"In more recent history, in 1896, the Tanghalan ng Sandata (Theatre of Weaponry) was established in Manila by Jose de Azas, where Filipino Martial Arts was openly taught. Even the prestigious Ateneo de Manila started teaching Arnis de Mano in addition to European fencing.

In the 1920's a group of Arnis experts, established the Kapisanang Dunong at Lakas (Association of Knowledge and Strength), composed of Placido Yambao, Buenaventura Mirafuente, Luis Cruz, Juan Aclan and Francisco dela Cruz. In the 1940's the association was renamed Tabak ni Bonifacio. All the founders of the association were experienced fighters and recognized instructors of the art by the Magtanggol Sporting Club, headed by Joaquin Galang.

On April 29, 1954, the Tabak ni Bonifacio, then headed by Buenaventura Mirafuente, with the support of Councilor Marciano Santos of Tondo, submitted to the Municipal Council of Manila a resolution to teach Arnis de Mano to all high schools in Manila. This resolution passed, and was enacted on August 6, 1954. This was highly supported by Antonio Maceda, then Superintendent of the City Schools of Manila."

Founders of the Kapisanang Dunong at Lakas

(Later renamed Tabak ni Bonifacio)



Placido Yambao



Buenaventura Mirafuente



Luis Cruz



Juan Aclan



Francisco De La Cruz

Even the private colleges and universities, both in Manila, and the Visayan region took notice of the effectiveness of Arnis de Mano as a means of self-defense and physical exercise.

In the 1950's, private self-defense clubs sprouted in the different cities and schools all over the country. Aside from Arnis de Mano, Karate and Judo were taught. In Manila, the most prominent were the Kapatirang Sikaran ng Pilipinas, headed by Meliton Geronimo, a Sikaran and Arnis (Abaniko style) expert from Rizal and the Commando Self-defense Club, headed by Latino Gonzales, an Arnis expert from the Visayan region, who later on switched to Japanese Judo and Okinawan Karate. At the Far Eastern University, Lamberto Ticsay taught Arnis de Mano as a physical education curriculum. Remy Presas was also giving instructions and started working on a program, which he later named Modern Arnis. At the Philippine College of Criminology, Joe Sidlacan was teaching Arnis de Mano and defensive tactics. Another pioneer in teaching Arnis de Mano was Jimmy Galez.

Remy Presas worked with Arsenio de Borja of the Philippine Amateur Athletic Federation (PAAF), which made Arnis de

Mano an approved physical education curriculum of the National College of Physical Education (NCPE).

It was during this period that Louelle Lledo moved from Zamboanga City to Manila, to further his studies, both in the academe and in the martial arts. He was already a black belt in Karate and an adept in the various styles of sword fighting, including European fencing, Visayan Eskrima and the Muslim sword fighting of Koon-tao and Silat.

In Manila, Lledo was introduced to other styles of Arnis de Mano, such as the Modern Arnis of Remy Presas, the traditional style of Porfirio Lanada and the innovative style of Daniel Rendal. But the greatest influence in his stick-fighting education, was from Delfin Bernarte, who called his technique Sistemang Praksiyon Brokil.

Comparison of Teaching Approach

Louelle Lledo learned the Filipino martial arts, the way it was taught by the Masters of old. Having learned the Japanese arts also, Louelle Lledo became aware of the similarities of the arts, but more important he noticed the difference in the teaching approach.

Seeing martial arts educa-

tion first hand, at the Japan Karate-do College of Grandmaster Gogen Yamaguchi, Louelle Lledo decided that the best way to learn and teach martial arts is through the educational system of the academe. The Japanese arts were systematically broken down to basic techniques before the application of the techniques were taught. Watching the Grandmaster and the seniors of the Japan Goju-ryu Karate-do in training, he realized their emphasis was training the basic techniques in forms and drills. Training started with a lot of reverence. Before physical preparation, mental preparation came first. Before teaching the technique, the students were taught the underlying principles. The students spent weeks, just in assuming the different stances. Defensive techniques, such as evasion, blocks, and deflections, were taught, only after learning the stances. Offensive techniques were taught, but only after the student learned how to evade and block while moving from one stance to the other. Physically, this type of training prepared the student in effective evasion. Mentally, it instilled in the consciousness that the student was training in a self-improvement class first and in a self-defense class second. Months would have passed before the

student was taught how to move, defend, and counter-attack. This training also served as a weeding out process for those who were not serious in learning the art.

Louelle Lledo was amazed by the very motive of the Karate-do College. The main goal was the development and propagation of Karate as an art, without regards to style or school of thought, despite the fact that there are four major styles of Karate.

Lledo envisioned a program of Filipino Martial Art Education with the same goal in mind. He even toyed with the idea of a true Filipino Martial Arts College, where students will study and graduate with a Degree in the Filipino martial arts, Major in Armed Fighting and Minor in Unarmed Fighting, or even a degree in martial arts healing.

In comparison, the Filipino martial arts are taught in an almost roundabout manner. All Arnis de Mano schools or styles have one thing in common - the way the art was being taught. Training starts by facing the opponent and blocking his strike. This training goes on until the student becomes an adept. Most instructors believe that this is the best and the only way to teach the fighting art - by actual exchange of blows from day one. A training session starts with engagement and ends with engagement. "No pain, no gain" seemed to be the principle on which learning Arnis de Mano revolved. Another "sorry" state of training the "old-fashioned" way, without the use of padded sticks or protective gear, is the injuries the trainees sustained. Aesthetics and good form were being sacrificed, for the sake of injuring the opponent to make him give up. More and more "one-tech-

nique fighters" and less and less martial artists are being produced. As less and less martial artists are being produced, less and less good teachers are also being produced.

A firm believer that there is always room for improvement, Louelle Lledo decided on a third option. He approached teaching martial arts as Martial Arts Education, just as he had witnessed at the Japan Karate-do College. He professed that if there is Physical Education, why not Martial Arts Education?

The interest in this approach became more apparent when Louelle Lledo was named Martial Arts Monitoring Officer of the Philippine Sports Commission. The PSC is the government agency responsible in monitoring the practice of all amateur fighting sports, including Karate, Judo, Tae Kwon do and Arnis de Mano, to insure a respectable showing in international competitions.

To upgrade his qualification, the Philippine Sports Commission sent him to several workshops, including the University of the Philippines Physical Education College, where he finished courses in Sports Medicine, Coaching, Officiating, Sports Management and Psychology, Competition Psychology, and Program Preparation, among others. He worked with the coaching and officiating staff of the various martial arts associations.

In 1986, with the change of administration, the Philippine Sports Commission, was abolished and replaced by another agency. This gave Louelle Lledo the opportunity to work on a program of martial arts education, using his association as the launching vehicle.

Rather than emphasizing the style of fighting, he placed the emphasis on the approach to teaching. To start with, he added "Filipino Martial Arts Education" to his association's name. Thereafter he called his school as "Amara Arkanis Sistemang Praksiyon Filipino Martial Arts Education."

Due to the different vernacular language, being used in teaching Filipino martial arts, Louelle Lledo used English terms in his Martial Arts Education Program. Use of English also became less confusing to the student and easier to understand. Every so often, Lledo throws in Filipino terminology to give his students a "taste of the original flavor." He also used English in teaching Karate, insisting that Karate is no longer just a Japanese art.

The program he instituted was simple enough. The program was so flexible, in its simplicity, that it was adaptable to different learning environments. The program worked in the settings of small sports clubs, law enforcement agencies, and even large universities.

Lledo did not develop "new" techniques or a "new" style. What he did was to "re-arrange" the way the techniques were taught. The first step was to plot a course of study, which will cover all the aspects of the Filipino martial arts and set the stage for upward evolution to an exciting and aggressive but safe modern fighting art. He separated the "unarmed" techniques from the "armed" techniques, but based the training on a common platform. Comparing the techniques will show that they are one and the same. The only difference is that "unarmed" techniques use

the empty hands and the “armed” techniques use a weapon. Whether the weapon is a single stick, a double stick, a knife, an alternative weapon, or even the empty hands, the maneuvers are the same.

His next step was to break down the maneuvers into their most basic elements. To achieve this purpose, the maneuvers were classified as “basic” and “progressive.” “Basic” meant executing the maneuvers in forms and drills. “Progressive” meant applying the maneuvers to various different situations or as Lledo says “situational application.”

Another term he uses, when referring to “basic” is “foundation.” “Foundation” included such matters as stances, breathing, footwork, basic strikes, basic thrusts, one-man drills and one-man forms, such as the classical maneuvers, and the Salpukan (Impact Training) and the palaisipan (mental game) or shadow fighting.

Application of techniques, whether in two-man drills or two-man forms were called “Progressive training”. The drills or forms may be in the manner of Bigayan or Palitan (semi-free style sparring) or Sabakan (free-style sparring or engagement).

After laying out the program, Lledo worked on the “nitty-gritty” elements. He broke down each maneuver to its most minute element and explained the techniques in detail. Starting with stance, he differentiated stance of execution from preparatory stance and explained the proper utilization of the stance in relation to the center of gravity and proper breathing. As a natural consequence, good form and aesthetics came about. With good form, proper use of body mechanics, leverage and

direct application of force came naturally.

Lledo, then selected classical maneuvers that were common in almost all the styles and schools, such as the kruzada, the single and double sinawali, the figure of eight, the redonda, the abaniko, the rompida, the sungkiti and other variations. He broke down and explained the basic patterns of linear motion into diagonal, vertical and horizontal; circular motion into clockwise and counter-clockwise; the basic strikes into forehand and backhand; the basic thrusts into overhand and underhand; and the disarming techniques into arm turn and arm twist. He designed warm-up and cooling down exercises from ordinary calisthenics into stick-fighting specific and oriented movements. He instituted one-man, two-men and even multiple-opponents drills. The emphasis of his training method was to make every technique a “simple reaction.”

Louelle Lledo adapted his program also in teaching Karate. He developed a Karate training program that laid emphasis on a very stable and strong foundation, which equated to winning gold medals in competition. Dean Ruben Estudillo, the Dean of the Physical Education Department, of the Cavite State University noticed the success of this program and hired Louelle Lledo to coach the University Karate Varsity Team.

After determining that Lledo’s credentials, was equivalent to a Master’s Degree in Physical Education, the Cavite State University instituted Lledo’s program and named Lledo Martial Arts Education Instructor in the Physical Education Department. Martial

Arts Education became a major course in the Physical Education Curriculum.

Under Lledo’s leadership, the martial arts team of Cavite State University won several regional and national gold medals and honors. The State Colleges and Universities Athletic Association (SCUAA) Region IV (composed of 16 state colleges and universities in the Southern Tagalog Region) named Louelle Lledo, Head of the Martial Arts Accreditation Team and President of the SCUAA Martial Arts Organization.

Punong Mataw-guro Lledo Migration to the United States

In 2002, Lledo and his family migrated to the United States carrying with him the title of Ambassador Plenipotentiary of the Department of Tourism’s Office of Philippine Indigenous Fighting Arts. With nobody to replace him, the Cavite State University cancelled the Martial Arts Education Program. Louelle Lledo met Eric Golden of the Golden Martial Arts Academy of New Jersey, who offered Lledo a position to teach Karate. While teaching Karate, he also threw in some stick fighting techniques.

Lledo’s skill and integrity spread like wildfire in the East Coast. Louelle Lledo, Dr. Christopher Viggiano, a Chiropractor by profession and Founder of the Shen Wu Dao School of Martial and Healing Arts, Sifu John Lee and Sifu Andy Cappucio, Chinese Martial Arts Masters, became very close friends and allies in the martial arts. Together they formed the Sword Stick Society, an alliance of martial artists from different arts. The Society’s main objective was to bring together the various

schools of martial arts in the spirit of camaraderie and unity. Under the auspices of the Sword Stick Society, a martial arts gathering was held and for the first time different schools of Filipino fighting arts from New Jersey, New York and even Maryland was held in New Jersey. The first gathering was followed by more gatherings, with the last held in New York, under the auspices of Rich and Rico Acosta from the Kali, Kuntao, Kruzada, attended by members of Ultimate Eskrima, Balintawak, Doce Pares, Pekiti Tersia, Amara Arkanis, and other independent martial artists. In one of the gatherings, Leo Gaje and Dan Inosanto were also present.

For Louelle Lledo, it was just the beginning. In 2006 the American Society of Internal Arts (Tai Chi) invited Lledo to give a workshop about Amara Arkanis. He has since then been an annual guest lecturer.

In September 2008, for the first time, Lledo bridged the gap between the Filipino Fighting Arts and Chinese Fighting Arts. The Traditional Wing Chun Kung-fu Association of the East Coast headed by Keith Mazza, with the blessings of Wing Chun Grandmaster William Cheung, invited Lledo to do a very successful joint workshop.

The success of this workshop and Lledo's expertise in the martial arts got the attention of the Wong Fei Hung Ga Kung-fu International Association and in their 13th Annual Championships invited Lledo to officiate.

On January 24, 2009, for the third time Action Martial Arts Magazine Hall of Fame honored Louelle Lledo with another award as "Ambassador of Goodwill of

the Martial Arts," for bridging the gap between the Filipino and Chinese Fighting Arts.

In 2009, Louelle Lledo published his book entitled "Amara Arkanis Fighting Art of the Mandirigma," and several Training Modules. It was also in 2009 when the FMA Digest, incorporated Louelle Lledo's Educational Depot as a regular column in the FMA Digest.

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ABECEDARIO OR ABAKADA

of Filipino Martial Arts Education

From the book Amara Arkanis, Sistemang Praksiyon

Filipino Martial Arts Education

By: Mataw-guro Louelle Lledo, Jr.

The first topics in learning a subject are often called the “ABCs” of that subject. In Filipino they are called the Abakada, while in Spanish they are known as the Abecedario. In the traditional cultural Arnis de Mano, the first lesson is the Abecedario.

The Abecedario is a set of techniques, which were so arranged, to defend against the basic five offensive movements, the four strikes of kruzada and the forward thrust to the heart, which originally was called the sinko-bocales, and later on sinko-tiros.

There are many Arnisadors, who claim to be Masters of sinko-tiros. However, not all of them are aware of the origin of the term

sinko-tiros. Originally, sinko-tiros were called sinko bocales which corresponds to the limang patinig (5 vowels) in Filipino language, which are A-E-I-O-U.

In as much as there were no formal or written program of instruction, the study of Arnis de Mano was tainted with an esoteric aura. This state created the belief, that only the “initiated” can learn the “complete curriculum of “true” Arnis de Mano. This belief led to some schools or styles that do not practice the Abecedario.

According to Inocencio “Ciok” Glaraga; “There is a very ancient book that deals with the root knowledge of Arnis de Mano. This book is supposedly called the Book of Amara-tan. Only the initiated knows the existence of, and can read and understand the contents of this book.” Whether this book really exists or just a figment of Glaraga’s imagination, is a matter of conjecture. But with Glaraga’s inexhaustible knowledge and skill, one can only wonder.

An entire school of fighting may be based on a small set of powerful basic techniques that can be used in a wide range of circumstances and applications. This small core set is an Abecedario or Abakada. When all the implications of an Abecedario or Abakada are understood, the student may have mastered a system.

In Amara Arkanis, the Abecedario, is considered part of progressive techniques, on account that they are combinations

of different maneuvers. It is for this reason that Amara Arkanis program of instruction, starts with the basic techniques individually, until the underlying principles of each technique, is understood and applied. Only after the underlying principles of the basic techniques are learned and grasped thoroughly, should the student be introduced to combinations of techniques and maneuvers, in the progressive phase of training such as the Abecedario.

The Abakada or Abecedario of Amara Arkanis Sistemang Praksiyon, Filipino Fighting Art, is a process of combining various elements of the art to learn effective sets of basic engagement techniques. It is intended to develop the student’s understanding of a particular technique, and his ability to use that technique in a set of drills.

Sets of drills in classical Abecedario were arranged in a series of rhythmic and patterned quick and lively bodily movements performed to music. Traditional classical abecedario are divided into three phases with descriptive terms. According to Inocencio “Ciok” Glaraga, this classical Abecedario is an important and necessary lesson to really understand and appreciate Arnis de Mano. Many Arnidadors, however, have totally ignored the practice of Abecedario.

The first phase of traditional classical Abecedario is Depensa Natural (Natural Defense), which are sets of defensive and offensive



Inocencio “Ciok” Glaraga

techniques (or both at the same time), against the most basic offense in Arnis de Mano, the sinko-tiros. The second phase is Depensa Opensiba (Defensive Offense) or the application of a defensive and an offensive technique. The third

phase is Contra Opensiba or the application of the counter offense for the “killing blow.” Depending on the school or origin of the style, there are other techniques or steps in Abecedario that carry other emotive names. From the first

phase, the maneuvers evolve to the second phase and then to the third phase. The maneuvers, should be practiced, in that evolution, so a better understanding of the techniques can be achieved.

In the traditional cultural Depensa Natural Abecedario, which was designed to be a “dance,” maneuvers follow the natural motion of the body in the transition and the continuity of the techniques from one to another. Each technique carries a descriptive name and may be a defensive or offensive tactic or both.

These pictures show Mataw-guro Ciok Glaraga performing the traditional classical Abecedario of the Depensa natural. *(These pictures were copied with permission from a video-tape made 20 years ago.)*



Lastiko Retirada



Kruzada Diretso



Plantsada



Pinayungan



Palis Abierta



Estrella Seguida



Kruzada Palihis



Aldabis



Media Prayle



Palis Cerrada



Bartikal



Tumbada Kruzada



Aldabon



Arabis



Sombrada Abierta



Sombrada Cerrada



Pluma



Romper



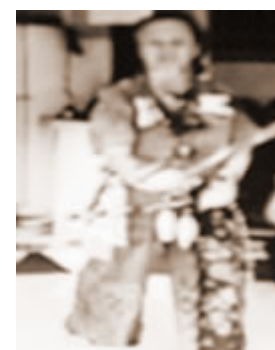
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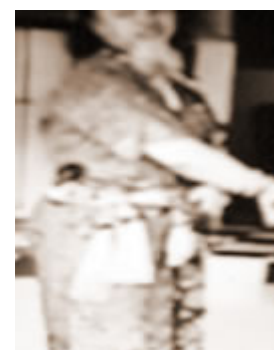
De Kadena



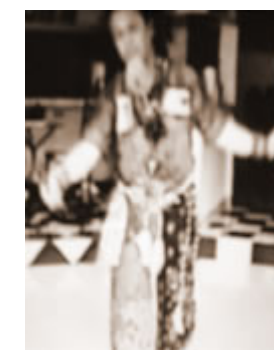
Kadena Real



Panipis Abierta



Panipis Cerrada



O Ekis

The Defensa Natural Abecedario is a sight to behold when executed by an expert, like Matawuro Ciok Glaraga. The footwork in the transition and the continuity of the motion from one technique to the other and the hip movement make it a beautiful dance. When combined with the abaniko technique, after each maneuver, at the same time banging the sticks together in rhythm with the music of the agong, the Abecedario is quite a spectacle. The beauty of the art, hidden in a dance form, was never regarded by the Spanish authorities as a fighting art, giving the masters of old the ability to train in the open.

Although Abecedario and Abakada, may be used interchangeably, in Amara Arkanis, the Abecedario is called Abakada, so as not to confuse it with the traditional cultural Abecedario. They have been simplified and divided into three classifications with each

classification sub-divided into three phases. The first classification of the Abakada is known as the Amara Arkanis Linear Abakada. It is a combination of the basic linear defensive movements, like the ginunting and the traditional classical maneuvers using linear offensive movements, such as the kruzada, abaniko and the sinawali.

The second classification is known as the Amara Arkanis Circular Abakada. It deals with the combination of tersia amara and the traditional circular classical maneuvers, such as the redonda, dolete and the figure of eight

The third classification is the Amara Arkanis Sistemang Praksiyon Abakada. This abakada was developed by Delfin Bernarte as a set of drills based on sistemang praksiyon. Louelle Lledo named this abakada but is only taught to Black Sash Degree holders, after they have mastered the other abakadas.

The first two Abakadas are defensive movements against sinko-tiros. For simplicity, the defensive maneuvers are divided into five steps: The first step is a defense against the upper forehand strike. The second step is a defense against the lower forehand strike. The third step is a defense against an upper backhand strike. The fourth step is a defense against a lower backhand strike, and the fifth step is a defense against a straight thrust to the heart.

The defensive techniques, is the gunting maneuver. Gunting (scissors) is a cutting instrument utilizing two blades working in opposing forces. Ginunting is the gerund for gunting. In the Filipino stick-fighting art, both words may be used interchangeably. Ginunting, although a maneuver that normally use doble baston, may also be executed using empty hands or a single stick and a single hand

Technically, the basic

ginunting maneuver should be executed in a single motion, coming from opposite directions. One motion blocks the attack and the other disarms or counters the attack

Through the passage of time the ginunting maneuver took different forms and executions. The maneuver may be executed in a one-two motion, but may also be classified as ginunting technique. It may even be executed in a one direction motion, yet still be called a ginunting as long as the technique is applied using doble baston.

In itself, ginunting maneuver is a “defensive” technique with less than lethal result. Some Arnisadors consider ginunting as “de-fanging” technique. In Amara Arkanis, it is considered a “preparatory” tactic to set up for the “killing” blow. There are instances when “de-fanging” is the better part of defense without necessar-

ily “killing” the opponent. It is for this reason that Amara Arkanis has reserved the Abakada as the first progressive system in the application of techniques.

With just minor modifications, simply because Arnis de Mano is a weapon-oriented fighting art, like the original Abecedario, Amara Arkanis Abakada is applicable in doble baston, espada y daga, solo baston and empty hands.

It is true that a tournament fighter may become a champion with just a single technique, but this is because tournaments are held in a controlled environment. It is true also that there is a possibility that this single technique may get one out of harm’s way in a defensive situation. However, it is also true that a better fighter may anticipate your one technique, successfully defend against it and use it against you. This is where

knowledge and understanding of the complete system of Filipino fighting art becomes a necessity.

In real-life, real-time conditions, the need to defend oneself will not always take place in an ideal locale. Circumstances and weapons may differ and vary. Skill in the complete system of the Filipino fighting art is not only advantageous but also important.

One has to bear in mind that there are probably as many fighting maneuvers as there are dialects in the country. There are claims that there are at least a minimum of 24 major styles and as many as 72. By limiting your skill to a single style of fighting, you are limiting your chances of survival in an all-out confrontation to the finish. Not only is this situation disadvantageous, it is outright hazardous.

Filipino Martial Arts Education Requirements

By: Louelle Lledo, Jr.

Historically, Arnis de Mano, is a fighting art much older than the Philippines itself. The art was originally called Kali. With the ban on the practice of the fighting art and the possession of fighting weapons, rattan sticks took the place of the broadsword, and the term Kali was replaced by Arnis de Mano.

Training in Arnis de Mano, like training in the ancient art of Kali, consisted mainly of engagement and evasion. There were no structured drills or a set program of instructions. The instructor teaches what comes to mind. This lack of teaching standard resulted in confusion and the emergence of several schools and styles without an established authority as to quality and legitimacy.

The latest attempt to establish this authority and set a uniform standard is the enactment of Republic Act 9850, declaring Arnis de Mano as a national martial art and sport.

What is Arnis de Mano as a Filipino Martial Arts Education. It is a course of study that encompasses the origin and history of the art, the philosophies that made the art part of the Filipino culture and the principles that govern each technique and maneuver. It must be a process of imparting knowledge to any age level without regards to gender or physical attributes.

To have a really successful Filipino Martial Arts Education, the following must be addressed:

1. Uniform mode of instruction and nomenclature of techniques and maneuvers
2. Standard syllabus of instruction

3. Standard ranking and grading system

4. Training and qualification of teachers

5. Classification of teachers

All these criteria, have been met in the formation of Amara Arkanis Sistemang Praksiyon, which gave me filial rights to claiming my school as Filipino Martial Arts Education.

There should be a standard program in the teaching curriculum of the Filipino Martial Arts Education, which must include a uniform mode of instruction. Most private schools use English as the mode of instruction while public schools use Pilipino as the mode of instruction. In Amara Arkanis, English is the mode of instruction interspersed with the national language as the need arises for emphasis, so all the students, Filipinos and non-Filipinos alike will have a uniform understanding. The names and terminologies of the techniques and the maneuvers, likewise must be uniform, either English or Filipino.

My two books, "*Amara Arkanis - The Fighting Art of the Mandirigma*" and "*Amara Arkanis Sistemang Praksiyon - Filipino Martial Arts Education*", may serve as the basis of the Filipino Martial Arts Education. The books demonstrate a teaching curriculum or syllabus of Filipino Martial Arts Education that was proven effective by the Physical Education Department at the Cavite State University. But Arnis de Mano, being a physical art, it cannot be learned by reading a book. One

must train under a competent teacher and "sweat it out with hard training."

There should also be a set of standards for grading and ranking purposes.

In the ranking system of Amara Arkanis, there are three classifications; the Uri ng Kaunlaran (Classification of Development), the Uri ng Kagitingan (Classification of steadfastness) and the Uri ng Karangalan (Classification of Honor).

The first two classifications deal with the technical, while the third deal with the intellectual and ideological.

In the Classification of Development, the student is trained and drilled in the underlying principles of the techniques and the proper execution of the basic techniques using doble baston (two sticks), which is considered the heart and soul of Arnis de Mano. It is very important to start Arnis de Mano training using the doble baston to develop both hands to both be a "strong hand." Constant training using doble baston creates muscle memory on both arms developing equal dexterity and power. Being a one-handed fighter, having one strong hand and one weak hand, is not only disadvantageous but outright dangerous in combat.

The Uri ng Kaunlaran (*classification of development*) has five hakbang or steps.

- The Unang Hakbang (1st Step) is considered a probationary period, which lasts three months. The student is not allowed to wear the uniform of Amara Arkanis. The student, however, is required to wear a red or black trousers and white t-shirt.
- After three months, the student is automatically promoted to the Ikalawang Hakbang (2nd step) and is required to wear the Amara Arkanis uniform with a white sash.
- After passing a promotional examination, a student is promoted to Ikatlong Hakbang (3rd step) and is awarded a white sash with bandang kulay ginto (gold stripe, the color of the sun) sewn two inches from the end of the sash.
- A student is promoted to the Ikaapat Na Hakbang (4th step) after passing another promotional examination, and wears a white with gold stripe with an additional stripe of bandang kulay langit (blue stripe, the color of the sky) sewn next to the gold stripe.
- The Ikalimang Hakbang (5th step), the last step in the Classification of Development, is awarded after the student demonstrates his mental and physical prowess to the satisfaction of the teacher and wears a white sash with gold, blue and an additional stripe of bandang kulay dugo (red stripe, the color of blood) sewn next to the blue stripe.

In the Classification of Steadfastness, the student is honed in the best angle of performance of the basic techniques and how they relate to the classical maneuvers to have a complete and better understanding of the Filipino Fighting Art Education. This is the stage when basic techniques are elevated to progressive maneuvers in preparation for sabakan (free-style engagement).

Between the Uri ng Kaunlaran (Classification of Development and Uri ng Kagitingan (Classification of Steadfastness) is a Pansamantalang Antas (Provisional Degree). This “limbo” stage is a provisional position for a prospective candidate for the Ika-1 Antas, Sagisag na Itim (1st Degree Solid Black Sash). The candidate wears a solid black sash, but the knot is on the left side. At this stage, a candidate must manifest his understanding of the significance of the Uri ng Kagitingan. This stage may last from six months to 24 months or even longer depending on the student’s ability and understanding.

The Uri ng Kagitingan (classification of steadfastness) has five antas or degrees: the knot of the sash is placed on the right side. The Punong Mataw-guro may give the candidate a promotional examination if he deems it necessary. Upon the discretion of the Punong Mataw-guro promotional examinations, may be waived as long as the candidate can display knowledge and skill equivalent to the degree that will be awarded, and provided that the candidate has fulfilled the requirements and the length of training necessary for the grade.

- Ika-1 antas, sagisag na itim may isang bandang kulay dugo - 1st degree - solid black sash with one red stripe. Total length of training - 3 years.
- Ika-2 antas, sagisag na itim may dalawang bandang kulay pula - 2nd degree - black sash with two red stripes. Total length of training - 5 years.
- Ika-3 antas, sagisag na itim may tatlong bandang kulay pula - 3rd degree -black sash with three red stripes. Total length of training - 7 years.
- Ika-4 antas, sagisag na itim may apat na bandang kulay pula - 4th degree - black sash with four red stripes. Total length of training - 10 years.
- Ika-5 antas, sagisag na itim may limang bandang kulay dugo - 5th degree - black sash with five red stripes. Total length of training - 15 years.

In the Classification of Honor, the student must have trained no less than 25 years and contributed in the development of Amara Arkanis in particular and the Filipino Fighting Art in general.

The Uri ng Karangalan (classification of honor) continues from the 6th degree to the 9th degree, with the 10th degree reserved for the Founder of the system. The knot, of the sash is placed on the middle. Minimum length of training to attain the 6th Degree is 25 years and minimum age is 50 years old. Minimum length of training to attain the 7th Degree is 30 years and minimum age is 55 years old.

- Ika-6 antas, sagisag ng Matatag - 6th degree, Symbol of Perseverance, solid gold sash.
- Ika-7 antas, sagisag ng Batikan - 7th degree, Symbol of Expert, solid blue sash.
- Ika-8 antas, sagisag ng Dalubhasa - 8th degree, Symbol of Master, solid red sash.
- Ika-9 antas, sagisag ng Marangal - 9th degree, Symbol of Honorable, braided gold, blue and red sash.
- Ika-10 antas, sagisag ng Maharajah – 10th degree, symbol reserved for the founder of Amara Arkanis – braided white, gold, blue, red and black sash

In order for a practitioner to advance to the Uri ng Karangalan, he or she must have reached a higher level of understanding Amara Arkanis. Physically; the student must have a complete understanding of all the techniques and must demonstrate a level of skill where defensive and offensive techniques have merged as one. Mentally, the student must have developed positive character traits and strictly adhere to the time-honored values of respect, fortitude and integrity. Additionally, the candidate must have contributed to the propagation of Amara Arkanis International as an organization and the Amara Arkanis Sistemang Praksiyon as a Filipino Martial Arts Education.

The Classification of Steadfastness starts with the Black Sash Degree. In other schools, the Black Sash Degree is looked up to as the culmination of the training. In Amara Arkanis, Black Sash Degree marks the real “beginning” of training. All the drills and training prior to the Black Sash Degree in Amara Arkanis is regarded as “training for development and preparation for proficiency.”

Classification of Steadfastness is the stage where the basic techniques are elevated to the next level, the term used in Amara Arkanis, instead of “advance” technique. In Amara Arkanis there are no “advance” techniques, only

basic techniques performed in a superior manner.

The basic techniques, such as the classical maneuvers kruzada, sinawalli, redonda, and abaniko are very fast, simple, and powerful. Likewise, they have a huge number of applications, both defensive and offensive. At the antas na itim ranking (black sash degrees) an Amara Arkanis student must have developed a mastery in the use and re-use of a limited well-chosen number of basic techniques in a startlingly broad range. The student must be able to apply them appropriately and must have a clearer understanding of the adaptability and versatility of the Filipino Fighting Art and a better appreciation of its effectiveness in combat and recognition of its aesthetic value as a physical art. Likewise, the student has to be aware of the countless combinations of techniques applicable in almost all situations. Just as important is skill in the myriad maneuvers and systems that comprise the Filipino Fighting Art.

System of Systems, is not a term reserved exclusively for Amara Arkanis Sistemang Praksiyon Filipino Martial Art Education. Any style or system that has upwardly evolved from a proprietary school of thought to a universal Filipino Martial Art Education school of thought, is rightfully and

properly classified as a System of Systems.

As further elaborated by Mataw-guro Inocencio Ciok Glaraga; “A system of systems is a universal-integrated-scientific-united-system-approach, with innovative program of instruction and applied training modules, which are flexible and adaptable, wherein its principles, techniques and practices are validated, qualified and quantified on a highly professional-intellectual level in conformity with the academic standard requirements for a martial arts education curriculum.”

Filipino martial art is no longer a “secret” art of a privilege few or a special interest group. It is now open to anybody wanting to learn. It is in fact, practiced around the world, and may be the most popular and fastest spreading fighting art. Opening the standards of the Filipino martial art, is needed, to preserve the art. It is high time to develop a united, standard Filipino martial art education program, without undue reference to the name of the school or style.

Enumerated are some obvious advantages of approaching Filipino martial art from an educational perspective, than the “secrecy” of a particular style.

1. Develops the individual,

without ignoring discipline.

2. Open to all relevant topics.
3. Encourage articulate understanding of the martial arts in as many forms as possible.
4. Combines and recombines basic techniques, in a wider and broader range of application.
5. Instead of mechanically learning the art, the individual understands why the technique is more effective and works better in a given situation.
6. Develops better form, better form leads to more speed, more speed leads to more power.
7. Overall, it is better for the art and the practitioner.
8. Set a standard for teaching, grading and ranking of teachers.

Another very important consideration in teaching Filipino Martial Arts Education is setting a standard for rating the ability of a teacher in relation and comparison to another and assigning a grade or classification based on teaching skill and competence.

There are five classifications or titles in the teaching hierarchy or “Guro-ship” of Amara Arkanis.

1. The Pansamantalang Guro (Provisionary Teacher),
2. The Pinatunayang Guro or simply Guro (Certified Teacher or simply Teacher)
3. The Punong Guro (Head Teacher)
4. The Mataw-guro (Master Teacher)
5. The Punong Mataw-guro (Head Master Teacher)

Louelle Lledo, as Founder of Amara Arkanis, holds the distinction of being called Punong Mataw-guro (Head Master-Teacher).

To be given the title of Pansamantalang Guro (Provisional Teacher) a candidate must be at least 1st Degree Black Sash and must have trained at least 5 years.

Before a practitioner can be a Pinatunayang Guro (certified teacher or simply teacher or guro), one must serve as an effective provisional teacher for at least one year.

There are three equally important requirements to be a certified teacher of Amara Arkanis.

The first requirement is at least 2 years of time in grade of 4th Degree Black Sash. It is expected that at this level a candidate for teaching certification has an exceptional understanding of the mechanics and physics of the

Filipino Martial Arts Education.

The second requirement is the ability to impart this knowledge to all students and not just the physically gifted. A candidate may be a very good fighter and competitor but unless he has the ability to impart his skill to the student, he cannot qualify as a certified teacher of Amara Arkanis.

The third requirement is the ability to motivate the student to aim for a higher level of understanding, both mentally and physically. The teacher must be able to motivate the student to attain total fitness. Total fitness encompasses technical fitness or the skill and ability to fight and win; physical fitness, or the endurance and strength to fight and win; and mental fitness, or the willingness and perseverance to fight and win.

A teacher must be able to motivate the student to have the heart, confidence and courage to

remain in control of the situation in a kill or be killed actual combat situation and when possible, without even fighting. The ultimate goal of Amara Arkanis is to achieve inner peace and balance. A candidate must possess the virtues of motivation and steadfastness in order to be a certified teacher of Amara Arkanis.

To qualify as a Punong-guro (Head Teacher), a candidate must have trained other teachers.

A Mataw-guro (Master Teacher), on the other hand must have trained and qualified other teachers and be recommended by another Mataw-guro (Master Teacher) and possess the other requirements as set forth by the Samahan ng mga Mataw-guro.

Due to these stringent requirements, only the Punong Mataw-Guro (Head Master Teacher) Louelle Lledo, reserves the authority to issue the title of Guro

(teacher) of Amara Arkanis. This is also in keeping with the tradition of the old school's teacher-student relationship, which Lledo proudly upholds.

One set of martial arts teachers is already moving in the direction of standardization and openness. These are the teachers who are endorsing the teaching of the Filipino martial art as an education (like physical education) rather than a style. They are designated as a Mataw-guro.

In a System of Systems, which eventually, must be referred to simply as Filipino martial Art, the teacher is addressed as Mataw-guro. Mataw is a Filipino Muslim term (from Maguindanao) which in English means knowledgeable or someone who knows. Guro means Teacher. Taken together, Mataw-guro means Knowledgeable Teacher or Master Teacher. The Mataw-guro is a high level rank that is well above entry level for professional Filipino Martial Arts teachers.

Mataw-guro Candidate Requirements:

- Able to understand and resolve many different points of view about Filipino martial arts and not restricted to a narrow, partisan point of view.
- Committed to modern, open approaches to education, including perspectives from diverse martial arts, like academic teachers in their ability to present any course using standard educational approaches and tools (syllabus, curriculum, lesson plans, etc).
- Lessons are presented in a logical organized fashion, to make understanding as easy as legitimately possible.
- Vocabulary must not increase confusion. Lessons are presented and techniques are described in simple, logical terms in the same language used for instruction in all other classes. Terms with traditional or historical value are important. Nonetheless, historical terms should not be introduced until the students have mastered the actions associated with those terms.
- Strong communication skills and regard for students.
- Knows and respects the lineage of master teachers in his art(s).
- Has recognized authority and experience to teach.
- Since there is still no standard in promotion and grading, the recommendation and endorsement of another Mataw-guro is necessary.
- Spiritual, mental and emotional affinity for the arts and their students.
- At any given time, student safety and health come before all other concerns.
- Support a genuinely Filipino martial art which is easy to teach and learn without excessive references to foreign martial arts.
- Foster improvements, in teaching, competition and expands his knowledge of traditional arts and evolves what he teaches accordingly.
- Bridge the gap between traditional and academic martial arts instruction for teachers.

Presently, there are just a hand full Mataw-guros. A body known as Samahan ng mga Mataw-guro (Society of Master Teachers) certifies a Mataw-guro.

The Samahan, is headed by its President Professor Armando Soteco, of the Integrated College of Physical Education and Sports, formerly National College of Physical Education, and Training Director of the School of Arnis Professionals. Vice-President for National Affairs is Mataw-guro Ciok Glaraga and Vice-President for International Affairs is Mataw-guro Louelle Lledo, Jr. Executive Secretary-General is Atty. Salvador Dimaisip, while Chairman of the Board is Dr. Alejandro Dagdag of the Pamantasan ng Maynila. All highly qualified, they took upon themselves and unanimously agreed to attest authoritatively who meets the standards as set forth.

Filipino Martial Arts Education and the classification of a hierarchy in the teaching of Filipino Martial Arts in the academe, was first envisioned by Dr. Aparicio H. Mequi, when he was the Chairman of the Philippine Sports Commission.



Left - Right: Armando Soteco, Inocencio Glaraga and Louelle Lledo, Jr., the moving force in the establishment of the Samahan ng mga Mataw-guro. All three are very vocal in the formation of a standard program for Filipino Martial Art Education.



In the Philippines, although they are also accorded other titles,

the following are more recognized as Mataw-guro's:



Mataw-Guro Armando Soteco

Training Director, School of Arnis Professionals
Integrated College of Physical Education and Sports (formerly NCPE)
President, Samahan ng mga Mataw-guro



Mataw-Guro Louelle Lledo

Amara Arkanis Sistemang Ptaksiyon, International
Vice-President for International Affairs, Samahan ng mga Mataw-guro

Mataw-Guro Inocencio Glaraga

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International Modern Arnis Association of the Philippines



Mataw-Guro Jose Sidlaca

Pandaigdig Kapatirang Sikaran
Law Enforcement Combative Arts



Mataw-Guro Yuli Romo

Bahad Zubu Mangtas Baraw

On March 6, 2010, the Samahan ng mga Mataw-guro awarded the title of Mataw-guro to the following and were issued Certificate of Recognition by the United Fellowship of Martial Artists (UFOMA) based in the East Coast, in recognition of their contribution to the development and propagation of the Filipino Martial Arts Education in the United States of America. They are presented here in alphabetical order.





Mataw-Guro Rich Acosta
Kuntao Kali Kruzada, International
New York City



Mataw-Guro Rico Acosta
Kuntao Kali Kruzada International
New York City

Mataw-Guro Jerome Barber
Tracy Kempo, Original Remy Presas Modified Arnis de Mano
Erie Community College, Upstate New York



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Ultimate Eskrima, International
Maryland



Mataw-Guro Wesley Crisostomo
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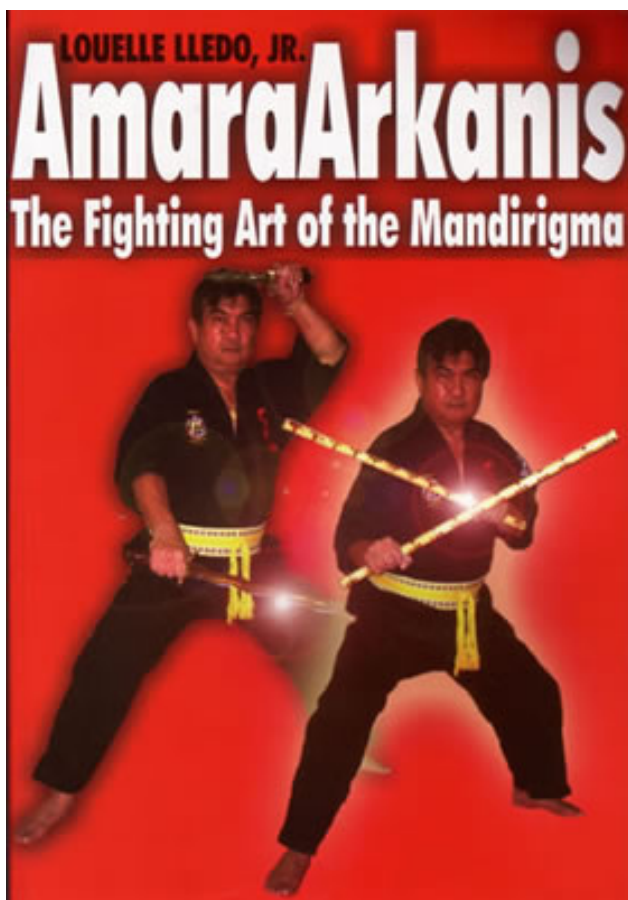
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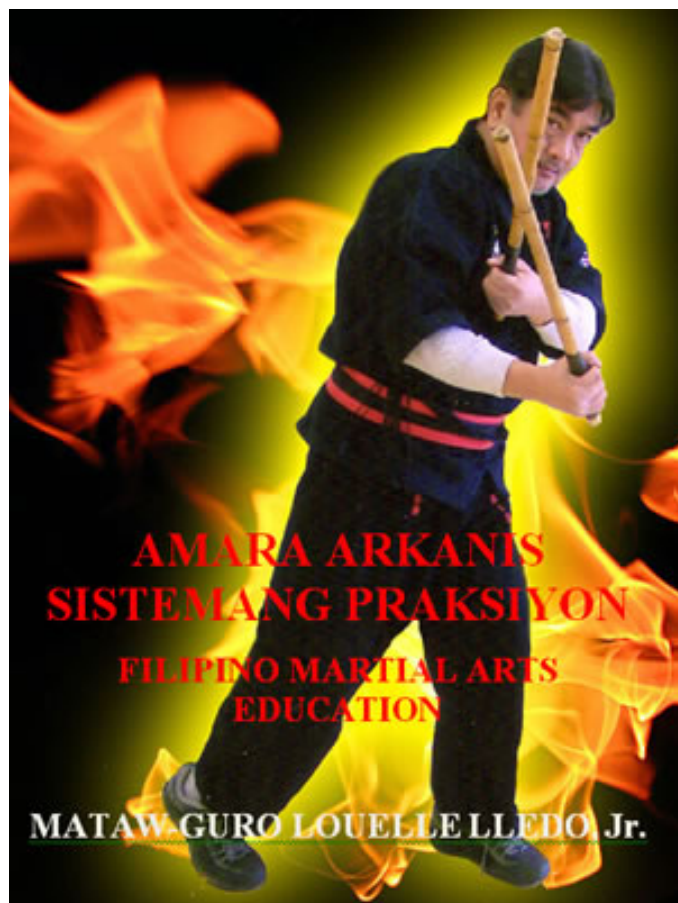
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