

Filipino Martial Arts

Researching Eskrima

Digest

Special Edition
2008

What is Eskrima?

Eskrima, Arnis, or Kali?

Definition and History of Eskrima

Eskrima Technical Aspects

Theoretical Framework

Current State and the Future of:

The Cinco Teros - Moro Moro Orabes Heneral



Publisher
Steven K. Dowd

Contributing Writers

This was actually a thesis by Mara Nepomuceno who has graduated from the University of the Philippines. The FMA Digest has formatted it from its thesis form to an article.

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From the Publishers Desk

Kumusta

This Special Edition is entirely written by Mara Nepomuceno who has recently graduated from the University of the Philippines. This was his thesis that he did at the University, and the FMA Digest has converted it into a Special Edition adding pictures and illustrations to bring a better understanding and identification of persons in which the thesis talks about or who is commenting during the interviews. Mara Nepomuceno did extensive research on the subject based on various resources which are noted at the end of the Issue.

First this thesis was totally about the Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral style and its Grandmaster Alejandro “Andy” Abrian, however Mara Nepomuceno could see that this art has the possibility and is in danger of extinction, unless an effort is made to preserve this art. So what he has added is an overall concept of what Eskrima is about and some of the means that are necessary to preserve the art. For at this time there are only a very few that are trying to keep the pure form of Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral alive.

Mara Nepomuceno has some original footage of Alejandro “Andy” Abrian, Henry Espero, Boy Laurena, Antonio Ilustrisimo, and other Filipino martial art Masters and players doing their Rapelon (with both sticks and blades), sparring and demonstrating moves in Luneta Park, circa early 1990's. And a few home videos on Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral's techniques have been made by Edwin Dy for Mang Andy's personal use, but none are out for public distribution.

Mara Nepomuceno in the future may release for sale a couple DVD's with this history however, at the present time he is trying to restore the footage to an acceptable viewing quality.

So it is hoped that you the reader will enjoy this Special Edition and that all practitioners of the Filipino martial arts who are training will never let the style they are training have the possibility of becoming extinct or forgotten.

Maraming Salamat Po



For further information Mara Nepomuceno can be contacted at:
[Click Here](#)

Researching Eskrima

Background

According to Wikipedia, Modern Arnis is perhaps the most popular Filipino martial art in the world. Because of this, there is a misconception that stick fighting is the only form of Filipino martial arts. This is not so. There is certainly a lack of awareness on the other facets of indigenous martial arts due to the popularity of modernized arnis.

Eskrima (a variant for the term “Arnis”, also known as “Kali”) is a complete system of martial arts that includes weaponry, striking, grappling, wrestling, and ground fighting. Practitioners learn and develop skills in weaponry and empty hand combat interchangeably. It covers all ranges of combat; from close to medium to long range. It utilizes techniques such as wrenches, sweeps, takedowns, throws and pressure point strikes. Most of the power utilized in Eskrima is derived from body movement and the economy of motion, thus, its techniques do not require too much strength.

Up until the last few decades, the existence of Eskrima was kept a secret by old time practitioners and grandmasters. “Teaching it outside of the Filipino community was considered taboo until the 1960’s...instructors of stick fighting classes in the 1960s and 1970s were reprimanded by Filipino elders for publicly teaching what had been traditionally kept secret, a practice which preserved a language and a culture, preventing a watering down of the art” (Wikipedia, 2007). Its rise to fame came through the efforts of Filipino-American immigrants who put up their own schools in California in the 1960’s. Moreover, early records of Eskrima’s existence were burned by the Spanish, and early practitioners did not have the means, literacy, or desire to properly document their art. Mark Wiley writes: “In general, these men lack any appreciation of the value or purpose of documenting their life-histories or technical fighting concepts. As such, much of the documentation on the martial arts of the Philippines has been recorded only after being passed down through oral traditions” (Wiley, 1996). The art of Eskrima has strived throughout the Philippines’ turbulent history; it was practiced in secret through the moro-moro during the Spanish times, used to fend off the Japanese and the Americans, and even said to have been used by Lapulapu himself to kill Ferdinand Magellan in the battle of Mactan.

The state of Eskrima is in constant flux due to two reasons: first, the diversity of peoples in the Philippine archipelago has brought about a vast array of Eskrima styles which vary from region to region. Second, one feature of Eskrima is that students are encouraged to choose certain skills and techniques and tailor to their own body types and movements, thus creating their own personal style. Because of this, it is not uncommon for practitioners to learn under a number of Masters of certain systems, develop a personal style (sometimes create their own system), and then teach that style or system to new students.

This constant state of flux and turnover of styles and systems is so quick that not much attention has been given to documenting and preserving these arts. Today, Eskrima is still taught in traditional ways wherein a Master imparts his knowledge verbally and by example, thus there are hardly any names for techniques. As a result, it is extremely difficult to find material on Eskrima.

In his article on the history of Eskrima in Manila and the surrounding areas, Wiley sums up the main reason for the undertaking of this study: “...to date, nobody has

attempted to document the contemporary history of Arnis in Manila, the country's capitol [sic]. And now that many of the art's masters have passed on, this task is becoming more difficult" (Wiley, 2001).

Significance

The above paragraphs have given brief albeit profound insight on how deep-rooted the art of Eskrima is in Philippine history and culture. It is extremely unfortunate that much of its history has either been forgotten about or gone up in flames. Mark Wiley shares my sentiment: "Information on Filipino martial culture is at once insufficient, largely inaccurate, and virtually unavailable to the uninitiated. While the better known martial arts of China, Japan, and Korea are described in a wealth of published materials, there is simply nothing comparable on the Filipino arts" (Wiley, 1996).

The situation is not so bleak however, being that there is an immense resurgence in interest in Filipino fighting skills, spearheaded by athletes like Manny Pacquiao and competitions like the URCC and Fearless. In the recent years there has been a rise in the popularity of Modern Arnis, boxing, and other mixed martial arts (e.g. Jiu Jitsu, Capoeira, Muay Thai, etc.). What's more, Hollywood has been shining some of its bright lights on Eskrima; with the likes of Angelina Jolie, Matt Damon, Benicio del Toro, Tommy Lee Jones, Lucy Liu, Milla Jovovich, Vin Diesel and Tom Cruise wielding arnis sticks in movies like Lara Croft: Tomb Raider, Mission Impossible: 3, The Bourne Identity and The Bourne Supremacy, and The Hunted. "The twentieth century has seen a revival of martial arts in the Philippines unparalleled in any country," Wiley says, "In the past sixty years the arts went from almost complete isolation and obscurity to international exposure and commercialization. With this exposure, a plethora of new organizations and associations, new schools and styles, new masters and grandmasters emerged, echoing the ethnic, tribal, and religious separateness in the Philippines" (Wiley, 1996). That being said, it is safe to say that this is the perfect time to bring "new" indigenous techniques to the table.

We now have an opportunity to bring forth these lesser known aspects of Filipino martial arts. This study is a call for active preservation of the relevant and indispensable facets of an art germane to the Filipino, his culture, history, and temperament.

Theoretical Framework

Alejandro Abrian and Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral

Alejandro "Andy" Abrian grew up around blades, old-time Eskrimadors, and actual duels among the Warays of Samar, who are known for their blade-fighting. He began learning Eskrima after meeting an Eskrimador named Mang Pasi from Bohol. Abrian, who had been training for boxing at the time, sought Mang Pasi's advice and tutelage on the sport. In turn, Mang Pasi did not see him as a boxer and advised him to practice Eskrima instead, which he was told could still be practiced in his golden years. He began training



Alejandro "Andy" Abrian

thereafter; climbing coconut trees, hunting wild animals, and doing drills with the lower part of his body immersed in the ocean as part of his endurance training.



Abrian relocated to Manila and began working as a janitor in Manila's Luneta Park; he held this job for ten years. He then began training under Antonio Ilustrisimo. Abrian soon left the Ilustrisimo group and in 1955, founded his own style: Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral, which was kept secret up until the 1980's when he began teaching his art at Manila's Luneta Park. He called his art Moro-Moro after seeing a Moro Eskrimador perform in his hometown, and Orabes Heneral after what Samareño's call low (Orabes) and high (Heneral) strikes.

Training focus for Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral is on the single stick, single knife, and empty hand, although double sticks and stick and dagger methods are also taught at advanced levels. One of the first things taught to new students is fast footwork; this is how it differs from other styles. Techniques and strategies are executed in dance-like fashion from low, crouching stances, with quick steps and shuffling maneuvers to the side and back of an opponent. There are no preset drills, and practice is spontaneous, free-form attack. The bob, weave, and duck techniques of boxing were also incorporated into the art. Sparring is taught from the offset, with emphasis on the importance of visualization and anticipation of an opponent's moves. The primary strategy of Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral is to strike first, and strike hard. In the event that one is not able to strike first, one must be able to counter right away.

When asked why Abrian and his art are so unique and sought after, Ralph Nepomuceno tells us that Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral is one of the very few kontrapelo styles that exist. His art is kontrapelo in that it runs counter to what all other styles do, thus putting most other stylists off their game. For instance, while almost all other systems fight *largada* (or *largo mano*; long range) or *media* (or *medio*; medium range), Abrian fights *corto* (close range), making it extremely difficult to all those used to long and medium range fighting to counter Abrian's attacks. Further, Nepomuceno recounts what another Eskrima master says of Abrian: "*Magaling si Andy kasi yung hawak niya sa sundang at baston, pareho.* (Andy is skillful because the way he holds his stick and sword is the same)" (Nepomuceno, 2007). Finally, there exists a system within the Moro Moro Orabes Heneral system that is generally kept secret, one that is not taught, but shown by Abrian to only a select few whom he deems most trustworthy. Those fortunate enough to see it can opt to learn from Abrian's example. It is this system that very few know about and that which Abrian guards most closely.



Alejandro "Andy" Abrian and
Ralph Nepomuceno

Basics of Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral

Weapons

For practical self-defense purposes, Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral focuses on single stick (solo baston), single knife, and empty hand training. The reason for this is that in the event of a fight, one will most likely be able to pick up a stick, a knife, or any single weapon, rather than two identical sticks of the same length and weight. Moreover, it is not uncommon to find people in the Philippines (especially in the rural areas) carrying knives and blades, but you would be hard-pressed to find even one man walking around with two identical bolos. To Henry Espero, Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral is best suited to edged weapons because of its low stance. “When you are crouched down, the tip of your weapon reaches quite far”, he explains, “When you are standing up, your reach is somewhat limited” (Espero, 2007).



However, the art does include training in stick and dagger and double sticks at its advanced levels.

Ranges

Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral can adapt to close, medium, or long range combat, but is best when used at close range.

Training

Fighting attributes are developed while fighting skills are learned and practiced. The idea is to develop the ability to block, redirect, or avoid an opponent's strike, and to then counter with speed and precision.

Once the basic strikes and counters are mastered, they are practiced conjointly with the footwork. While training, students perform the techniques over and over against attacking an opponent. Visualization and the creativity of the mind plays a vital role in the training of Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral, as students must develop the skills to not only block and counter a single strike, but to intuit where the opponent may strike next and place themselves in a safe position. The reason for this type of training is explained by Wiley: “The more creative the mind to direct the visualized opponent to attack and counter in fast and unpredictable ways, the better honed and agile skills the practitioner will develop” (Wiley, 2000).

From the basic block and counter training, students progress to block and block and counter and counter training.

Drills

Because Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral is an art steeped in practical techniques and training, it does not include a large number of training drills. While there are no preset

drills, when the art's techniques are linked together and performed in succession, they become drill-like. In training, partners block and counter at random in simulation of an actual (spontaneous) encounter. This type of does not have a preset format but like a drill, develops in practitioners honed reflexes, speed, maneuvering abilities and spontaneous movement reactions. Mang Andy believes that this is the only way to truly develop realistic fighting skills, since pre-arranged drills are too limiting and students tend to get lost in them and focus instead in drill development rather than fighting skills development.

The Rapelon

A multi-directional drill was created by Abrian to train against two or more opponents. The Rapelon is a dance-like fighting form, created for shadowboxing when facing multiple opponents. Its purpose is to train in a continuous motion; to attack and defend from different directions in one smooth flow of action. The Rapelon trains one to evade and coordinate footwork and adjusting to the proper distance between you and your opponent while in motion.

Counters and Footwork

Since there is no way to ascertain how and opponent will attack, and with which foot forward, Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral does not train students in preset counters to specific attacks. The essence of the system is in its automatic movement and counters using the art's dynamic footwork and body shifting. Additionally, while striking, the foot moves with the strike at the same time. Shuffling backward, forward, and sideways in low, crouching position is the norm for this system. The footwork itself is trained in a dance-like fashion, with the practitioner moving in any number of directions to avoid imaginary attacks and to develop agility and stamina.

Strikes

There are three categories of striking when using the single stick - twelve strikes, five strikes, and seven strikes - each with its own reasoning and purpose. Students are taught the twelve striking sequence first, along with each strike's defensive blocking and countering techniques. Accordingly, they are taught to block, counter strike, and lock the opponent's attacking arm right away.

As was mentioned earlier, the art is based on the Orabes (low) and Heneral (high) strikes. Hence, Orabes Heneral means that practitioners execute both high and low strikes either in succession or interchangeably, and in a smooth, continuous manner.

The Prayle de Kubli

One distinguishing feature of Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral is the backwards strike to the head, which Abrian calls the *Prayle de Kubli* (Abrian, 2007). While strikes in other styles are executed in a forward manner, practitioners of Moro Moro Orabes Heneral step forward and to the side of the opponent and swiftly execute a backwards strike to the back of the opponent's head (Laurena, 2007).

The Cinco Teros

The Cinco Teros pertains to the five cardinal universal to Eskrima. These five strikes are included in the numbering system of strikes for almost all systems of Eskrima. Though they are generally known as the Cinco Teros, the numbering and order of the strikes varies from system to system.

The Cinco Teros for Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral is as follows:

- A uno with the right hand is a strike to the left temple, while a uno with the left hand is a strike to the right temple.
- A dos with the right hand is a strike to the right knee, while a dos with the left hand is a strike to the left knee.
- A tres with the right hand is a strike to the left elbow, while a tres with the left hand is a strike to the right elbow.
- A quatro with the right hand is a strike to the right shoulder, while a quatro with the left hand is a strike to the left shoulder.
- A cinco is a thrust to the solar plexus which can be done with the right or left hand interchangeably.

Disarms

There are roughly fifty basic disarms found in the curriculum of Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral.

Fighting Strategies

The principal strategy in Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral is to preempt an opponent's movements, strike first, and strike hard. If you are not able to strike first, then counter right away, be it with a stick, knife, empty hand, or joint lock.

Practitioners hold their stick with the tip pointing down when facing an opponent so that there is no opening in their guard. The strategy here is to show your opponent your position, wait for his strike, and then maneuver to his weak side and strike his newly opened targets.

While many Arnis systems make use of striking sequences called "angles of attack," practitioners usually strike without purpose. In contrast, the strategy Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral utilizes when striking or counter-striking in this system is to hit a target with a specific purpose in mind. For example, if you strike your opponent's eyes he will not be able to see, if you strike his arm he might either drop his weapon or have difficulty moving his arms thereafter, if you strike his feet he may not then be able to effectively utilize footwork.

If your opponent is skilled and the fight cannot be ended right away, another key strategy is to remain calm and observe and learn from your opponent while fighting. Most fighters make use of the same strikes or combinations when fighting; this is an opportunity to observe the openings and exploit them one or more times and the end to the combative encounter will undoubtedly present itself.

Fighting Techniques

When swinging the stick, practitioners of Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral use their empty hand to propel the wrist of the weapon-holding arm to help produce power and

speed. Further, the art seeks and make use of nerve strikes and pressure point manipulation while holding, disarming, and throwing an opponent.

Joint locking and disarming techniques are also mainstays of this style.

One of the most important things to pulling off the art's techniques is fast and dynamic footwork. Mark Wiley, who trained under Mang Andy, attests to this: "Indeed, among the various styles of Arnis and Escrima, the footwork of Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral is quite different" (Wiley, 2000).

Free-Sparring



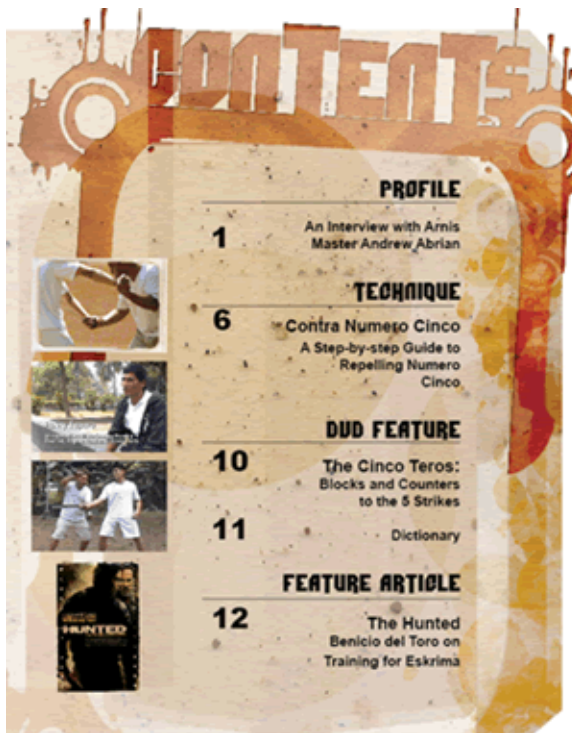
Practitioners of Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral view sport-like free-sparring as a sport to be a possible trap students can get caught it (like preset drills), and is therefore looked down upon. What happens with free-sparring as a sport is that people get caught up in succeeding in safe, rule-bound sparring sessions and competitions that that forget the intended combative applications of their techniques. Instead of developing the skills to take out opponents quickly and effectively, they develop unnecessary multiple striking combinations to non-lethal point-awarded targets and the stamina needed to keep up that pace of striking for minutes at time. In the real world, fights (especially those with weapons) don't last that long.

Practitioners of the art, however, do fight one another, in addition to those willing practitioners of other styles, but they only do so in moderation and without the use of body armor or padded weapons.

Promoting Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral

In the past years, Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral has been featured in the books *Filipino Martial Culture* (Second Edition) and *Filipino Fighting Arts: Theory and practice*, both by Mark Wiley, who was Mang Andy's student. Mang Andy and his techniques have also been featured twice in *Rapid Journal*, in the book *Masters of Kali, Arnis, and Eskrima* by Edgar Sulite, and in Mark Logan's segment on *TV Patrol*. A few home videos on Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral's techniques have been made by Edwin Dy for Mang Andy's personal use, but none are out for public distribution.

The Rapelon magazine





T TECHNIQUE

DVD FEATURE

THE CINCO TEROS: COUNTERS AND BLOCKS TO THE 5 STRIKES

Philippine Martial Arts, also known as FMA, is recognized around the world and very well respected by martial arts practitioners. There are a lot of different forms of stick fighting, especially in the Philippines, from Modern Day Arnis to Eskrima and to other evolved forms of stick fighting. How Eskrima became Arnis was an aftermath of an episode in Philippine history when Eskrima was outlawed by the authorities as one of the precautionary measures taken to discourage emboldened and oppressed people from rising in revolt against the Spanish rule in the Philippines. Nevertheless, Eskrima was practiced in secret. Most of the practical stick fighting methods or systems are now being turned into sports which is good that everyone can take up and learn but the real essence of Eskrima or Arnis is that it is practiced everyday to develop a person from the mind, body and spirit.

Moro Moro Orantes Hernandez is a system that Alejandro "Andy" Abran started and developed in the early 1980s, for basic and practical

self defense. Like any other martial art, his style evolved and became more complex from the simplest forms of striking. Fluid movements and rapid attacks that would blind an opponent in a single thrust of a stick are apparent in his style.

Producing Moro Moro Orantes Hernandez Eskrima is a physical you have to move every part of your body in the slightest manner conserving energy and should be able to move fluidly and smoothly. Cinco Teros, or the Five Cardinal Strikes is what Andy Abran



developed to keep his system simple and easy to understand, but takes a lifetime to master. Teaching Eskrima most of his life opened a lot of doors for him and his students, most of them have their own systems and methods of teaching. The Rapselin is what they call their form of dance showcasing each others style and approach in Eskrima, which could be an entry form of attack or defense and attack that comes from high and low or even empty hand fighting. Viewing all the attacks, simple and straight determines the mastery of Eskrima, when attacked by multiple attackers there should only be one goal, for you to be the one standing and walking away after the fight. Eskrima provides the potential to put you into best shape of your life. You'll feel better, have tremendous energy, achieve a state of calm focus and look great, it gives you control in your life. "Kung karamon mo kung kaya mo" Mang Andy says and pointing to his heart. And if you can give your life give your best.

A better understanding of Master Abran's style can be seen in this instructional video. Stick techniques include some heritage of Master Abran during his rapelin with a solo baston and a live blade in Luma Arnis, 1980, and his most recent video interview. Other famous figures include interviewees and rapelins by Ernesto Laurina, Henry Espino (founder of Rapelin Palaro Martial Arts), and Arnie Balgoa.

DICTIONARY

ARABIAN (Arabic), a type of a boxing style in the Philippines.

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16 PROFILE

Q: Could you tell something about yourself?

Master Abran: I am Andy Abran, a native of Eastern Samar in the Visayas region. I just turned 74 last November 1 and I am presently residing in Quezon City.

Q: Can you tell us how you started your martial arts training?

Master Abran: I was around seven years old when I started to learn the art of Eskrima in my province. The elders use the term Eskrima, rather than Arnis. Before that, I was into boxing. During that time, I was the reigning world boxing champion, that is why boxing became a famous sport here in the country. As a teen, I was always into fights with other teenagers during our games in basketball or during our local community dance parties.

Once, I heard that my uncle has a boxer friend from a neighboring town who was willing to teach. I went there to challenge the man, who

was known as Mang Pao and he also happened to be an eskrimador. I was given a chance to have a few rounds with him. He noticed that I was quick to react and agile, but he also told me that I don't have what it takes to be a good boxer because I don't possess the qualities of a knockout puncher. He then advised me to pursue Eskrima which he said would be best for me. He also emphasized that I would be able to train in Eskrima even in my golden years.

Since that day, I have trained, researched and developed further my brand of Eskrima.

Q: Who were your teachers in Eskrima?

Master Abran: No one taught me. When I decided to pursue the art of Eskrima, I focused myself to train by the sea during daily. My endurance training included climbing coconut trees, hunting wild animals and fishing with the lower part of my body immersed in water while I do my drills. In

our province, there were many elders who were proficient eskrimadors and I have always admired them and they served as my model to be a good eskrimador someday. I loved to watch and interact with other eskrimadors both young and old and this amplifies my skill and knowledge. I had learned to adapt, train and develop my own techniques. I try to devise my own techniques to outlast my opponents.

Q: Aside from these training drills, what other features does your style emphasize?

Master Abran: Other styles use mostly "tapi-tapi" or they tend to parry away the opponent's arm. In my case, I prefer to direct and control the opponent's arm and subdue him at once. This will avoid giving the opponent a chance to redirect his attack from another angle.

Q: What do you consider your primary target?

(continued on last page)

THE CINCO TEROS

5 STRIKES

Of the five twelve strikes used in Eskrima, the Cinco Teros are the five cardinal strikes found within these twelve strikes. The sequence of types of strikes vary from system to system. The Cinco Teros used in the Moro Moro Orantes Hernandez System is explained here.

UNO - SENTIDO
An uno strike with the right hand is a strike to the right temple, while an uno strike with the left hand is a strike to the left temple.

DOS - TUMBO
A dos with the right hand is a strike to the right knee, and a strike to the right knee if you're using your left hand.

TRES - BAKO
A tres with the right hand is a strike to the right elbow, while a tres with the left hand is a strike to the left elbow.

CUATRO - BALKAT
A cuatro with the right hand is a strike to the right shoulder, while a cuatro with the left hand is a strike to the left shoulder.

CINCO - SAKSAK
A cinco is a thrust to the solar plexus whether you are using your right or left hand.



KNIFE DEFENSE

CONTRA NUMERO CINCO

After working all these specialties in the same respect of martial arts and combat, I often wonder how it would be like in a real life and death situation. There are various views up the subject presented in print and video, but I believe that majority of the prevailing views involves no such risk. It is quite common for some martial artist to incorporate stick fighting techniques in actual knife exercises, contrary to reality this practice is downright dangerous!

There is a serious problem, especially among the martial-arts public, that actual fights with weapons resemble duels as portrayed in movies featuring Zorro or Gladiators. This is impossible at best and quite absurd. Popular manuals on fighting rarely describe the veritable outcome of a knife encounter and this leads to the misconception that engaging in knife combat will enable a person to escape injury or death. In reality, disfigurement, permanent injury and death, if one or both parties, are rather commonplace in such duels. Real fights usually end up in a brawl and would often result in mauling, choking and grappling.

To give you an idea of some combat knife-to-knife fighting situations, here are some defensive maneuvers against the straight thrust, more commonly known as "bones clear" or knife number five as demonstrated by Ralph Nemesio, student of Idoe Idoe Ochoa, founder, an ancient style that has its roots from Spain, where its people are known for their fondness for fighting with low bladed weapons.

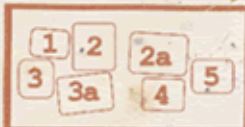
Excerpt from
"NOT FOR ZORRO:
Thoughts on Knife Fighting" by
Edwin Dy
Published in: Rapid Journal,
Vol. 5, No. 1, March 19, 2001



1. R. Nemesio and opponent square off.
2. Upon receiving the opponent's thrust, R. Nemesio immediately controls the opponent's weapon-bearing hand, and closes in. Note, R. Nemesio's entrapment of the opponent's fist or wrist with his chest and the weapon-wielding arm with his dagger.
- 2a. Closer view from the opposite side.
3. Using his lock on the opponent's right hand for leverage, R. Nemesio maneuvers around his opponent, thereby spinning the opponent off balance.
4. R. Nemesio continues inserting his head to break the opponent's elbow, while his right hand slices the back of the opponent.
- 4a. Closer view from another angle.
5. R. Nemesio proceeds to cut the opponent's wrist and finishes off by disarming him.



T TECHNIQUE



1. R. Nemesio and opponent square off.
2. Upon receiving the opponent's thrust, R. Nemesio immediately directs the opponent's weapon hand to the rear, and inserts his dagger between the opponent's leg to cut the wrist.
- 2a. Closer view from the opposite side.
3. R. Nemesio steps in with a shoulder strike and maintains body contact to leverage control, as he proceeds to slash the opponent's inner thigh.
- 3a. Closer view from the opposite side.
4. R. Nemesio moves to cut the opponent's throat.
5. Stepping out, R. Nemesio continues his cutting action spinning the opponent off his feet. Note R. Nemesio has maintained control over the opponent's weapon-bearing hand all the time.

**DVD FEATURE**

THE CINCO TEROS: COUNTERS AND BLOCKS TO THE 5 STRIKES

More More Crabes Hernal is a system that Alejandro "Andy" Abrian started and developed in the early fifties, for basic and practical

self defense. Like any other martial art, his style evolved and became more complex from the simplest forms of striking. Fluid movements and rapid attacks that would blind an opponent is a single thrust of a stick are apparent in his style.

Practicing More-More Onsets: Hemeral Ekima is physical you have to move every part of your body in the slightest manner conserving energy and should be able to move fluidly and smoothly. Cinco Tero, or the Five Cardinal Strides, is what Andy Abriles



developed to keep his system simple and easy to understand, to make it *flexible* to master. Teaching Eskrima most of his life opened a lot of doors for him and his students, most of them have their own systems and methods of teaching. The Rapelan is what they call their form of dance showcasing each others style and technique. It is a form of dance that is a series of forms of attack or defense and strikes that comes from high and low or even empty hand fighting. Keeping all the attacks simple and straight determines the mastery of Eskrima, when attacked by multiple attackers the student will use one guard to defend himself, one stance and one footwork to get out of the fight. Eskrima provides the potential to put you into the shape of your life. You'll feel better, have tremendous energy, achieve a state of total fitness and look great, it gives you control in your life. Please demonstrate my learning to you, I will be glad to show you my skills. And if you can give your life all you have best,

A better understanding of Master Abrian's style can be seen in this instructional video. Bonus features include rare footage of Master Abrian doing his rapelon with a solo baston and a five blade in Lorreta circa, 1960, and his most recent video interview. Other bonus features include interviews and rapelons by Ernesto Laurena, Henry Espino (founder of Rapido Realismo Martial Arts), and Anna Balboa. »



DICTIONARY

ALLANED *Stenodytes*, a fish, a swimming style unlike before.

and with a thick
JAZZ (pleasantly colorful and rhapsodic) work on the
customers of the Japanese (age 20+).
JAZZ: the "modern" Japanese art of dancing or stick-
fighting, developed into a sport after World War II.
JAZZ-BOOM: one who is profane in the modern
world art of jazz.

CONEC TIONS (Spanish): the line between or region of attack's front within the force unit

RAST a hardened indifference to the Philippines which is used in the practice of violence and war
RASTON (jazz) a case, used generally as a term referring to the fighting, tricks of violence and war

DOUBLE BATTERY (Spanish): the act of using two cases, sticks, or clubs in self defense
DOZE TERM (Spanish): the twelve inches or angles of attack found in the various systems of defense

ERREKINA (Daguerri): the "Vision of Filipe" set of
with holding (e.g., facing with stick)
ERREKINAKO: one who is proficient in the will do

ESPADA / *Spanish swordplay*: the style of whitens in steel fighting which employs the use of the sword and the dagger

KALB: a suppurative insect used among the Malays of Mindanao and Java, also spelled *karn* and *kari*.
KANAGONG: a hard wood similar to ebony found in the Philippines and used as comb sticks.

LABO NANO (Spanish) long hand, used to describe the long sleeve style and techniques found within Filipino martial arts

MELODIA (Spanish) melody, a term used to describe the fighting techniques employed at a medium range.

ATERO ATERO (Spanish): a name for a specific type of kamadya (gagayay) which features the triangle of Chemistry at the ethereal Muslim warrior of the Philippines.

TUNTOU *AT BACA*: the style of education at work.

F FEATURE

Interview with Benicio Del Toro
On the Making of *The Hunted*, Realistic Fight
Scenes and the Blues versus Techno.
By Teja Van Wicken



The Hunted, starring Bono del Toro and Tommy Lee Jones, that rare chase film that is pure a film and little else.

Rather than using talking heads, the film allows the actors to do the work of the storytelling. The action, therefore, has to be real, urgent, unusual, gritty.

In the following interview Academy Award Winner Dennis Quaid discusses his experience filming, then training in Sayoc Kali, highly evolved Filipino martial art.

TYW: How did you know you had found the right martial art for the movie, and how did you convince Director Billy Friedkin to bring the Koyote guys on board?

BOT - I want to [expert tracker and instructor] Tom Sippen Jr. to have a meeting with him about the tracking aspect of the movie. At that point I'd read the script and it seemed that my character kept using a knife. So, eventually it was like, let's go to where the heart of the movie is. I really think that my character in *The Hunted* is an urban, modern day Tarzan.

He doesn't use a hand gun at all. So, among the people I was supposed to meet while I was at Tom Brown's was [Lloyd] Master Instructor Tom Kier who was a knife encyclopedia. Right away I saw he knew that knife like the back of his hand - no one else knew it like he did.

spent about two hours with him in the Los Angeles state instructor Gordon Katz. "I threw the knife a couple of times and made a couple of moves. And then I came back to L.A. and I met with Billy Friedman and I said—'you know, we need to bring Tom Yee in. The knife skill is the key to the movie.' So I called Tom. He was a scientist of the knife. The movie as we know it now - for my character - for Halam, is 80 percent knife fighting. So, that was the first step, to get the director to bring in the best of the best to work with me and then everything else fell into place."

But I had to keep him longer than a week, because I'm just about to learn a whole world of the knife, and I want to know as much as I can. So Tom and Ray [Playboy Master Instructor Ravi Ray] came to stay for a week and basically they stayed the rest of the film. It's a classic story of the new guy makes good in Hollywood.

TYW - Can you talk a little about the creative process?

(continued on next page)

open up. I had to be the terms. I go around, basically pushing him - okay, what would happen here? well, what would you do? could I do that? could I do that? yes, no, that's a dangerous move. If someone is holding a gun at you, how do you get into it? You deconstruct the move, and then you go for the physical aspect of it. You look at the scene and see what it proposes. I'm always into the reality of things. I want to believe it, I'm a terrible movie goer. I always think real is more interesting than fiction. Truth is stronger than fiction, and reality is more interesting than fiction. So, the process would go - okay here's a scenario, what could happen, let's talk about it, and eventually we would get on our feet and Tim would act it out and - what if I did this, and he would say, well I would have to do that, and that's a little bit more real because I'm not going to stand here and get stabbed in the neck or whatever - always thinking about the opponent as the best he can be. But people do make mistakes, so what's a mistake that could be believable. A cop would never make that big of a mistake, but cops make mistakes, people who are trained make mistakes - so the mistake can be tiny, but for people who really know how to deal with a weapon, that small mistake would be huge. So, then it becomes realistic. The better the fighter, the better the fight. It's like Ali and Frazier. Two different styles. You put them together, you got one hell of a fight.

TWW - What made you want to work on the movie?

BDT - Well, there are many elements - Billy Friedkin, the director, and [in-staff] Tommy Lee Jones for one. Also, we worked to make the script less of a plain track and white end of film, you know, well versus good. It wasn't the knife fighting that made me want to do the movie. That wasn't until after I met Tim and company - the knife fighting became like the heart of the picture. Overall, I'm proud of it. Mostly, the fighting is superb.

TWW - What inspirations do you use in preparation for a character?

BDT - There are different things. For

The Hunted, my main source of inspiration was having Tom Kier there and [faded] coach and [faded] Alan Sheranian hitting me with his brief case, telling me I was on a movie. You start believing that. I can't say that you're really a blade guy. But it takes years to really become a blade guy and that's the main thing to understand. I have to make everyone else believe, and if I can get someone that knows a little bit about blades to believe that I know how to use it, then I'm in. And it was all done right there on the spot pretty much. We were shooting it and we were working on it, no month before of prep or anything like that.

TWW - What has been your experience working with fight choreography?

BDT - I've been lucky. I worked with a guy named Chuck Daniels on The Way of the Gun. And then on the Hunted with Tim and Raf. So I've been lucky to work with the best of the best. And I think it's essential when you're doing a movie about something, to be with people who know about that something. You're not born knowing it all. That's the fun of it - to be with people that know how to do something and to learn a little bit about it. That's what makes making movies really exciting. You go on a journey - and I don't mean one location to another - a physical and mental journey, learning about the Philippines, meeting interesting people, even learning how to control your blood in your hand so you can throw it at someone's face as a way of defense."

TWW - What are your favorite action movies? What makes a good action film?

BDT - My idea of a good action film is

THE HUNTED

(continued from p. 12)



Matrix. I like that movie. But like I mentioned there is logic - when a punch or a knife or a gun is used with a brain behind it, not just for the hell of it. When the action is part of the story and isn't only justified by the location or temperature. That it's based on reality, on the moment, on the circumstances of the story. I think Sonessa has done some great action stuff in his movies. Some of the Bruce Lee films have some great stuff. Enter the Dragon, Hurricane's The Hidden Fortress. That's genuine great stuff. What's your favorite action movie?

(The remainder of the article will be published in next month's issue)

Master Abrion: For a person with a knife or a weapon, the primary target is always the weapon-hand. You must be able to control the weapon-hand so that it won't be able to cause you any harm or damage. The next targets are the legs so that the opponent won't be able to run or retreat. Then you can simply ask your opponent if he wants to live or die.

AN INTERVIEW WITH ARNIS MASTER...

(continued from p. 1)



Q: Do you have any combat strategy?

The Cinco Teros Instructional Video

DVD Liner and DVD CD





Ralph and Diego Nepomuceno demonstrating disarming using the Cinco Teros



Ralph Nepomuceno demonstrating a counter attack to strike Cinco



Alejandro Abrian doing his Rapelon with a live blade in Luneta circa 1990's



Mang Amie Balgoa
Demonstrates his Rapelon



Major player Mang Boy Laurena
doing his Rapelon



Major player and Founder of Rapido Realismo Martial Arts Mang Henry Espero talks about the Moro Moro Orabes Heneral Orabes system, Alejandro Abrian, and Eskrima in general



Alejandro Abrian talks about the Prayle de Kubli, growing up with Eskrimadors, and the Moro Moro Orabes Heneral system (Quezon City, 2007)

The Current State and the Future of Moro Moro Orabes Heneral

Abrian, now 80 years old, suffered his sixth stroke in September 2006. Confined to a chair with slurred speech and impaired hearing, there is no chance of him practicing and teaching Eskrima as he always has. Despite the impediments left by the stroke, his grip is still strong and his mind is still sharp. From his chair he taught an Australian student in December of the same year, and is currently teaching his most recent student, Diego Nepomuceno, by proxy. Nepomuceno, only 16 years of age, expresses much desire to continue training with Abrian for as long as possible. The Australian, on the other hand, according to Abrian's wife, will be visiting again soon. He has had many other foreign students over the years, she adds. Upon embarking on this study, the researcher has found that Abrian is still the subject of many conversations in online martial arts forums, websites, and message boards, and is still sought after by practitioners from all over the world. Two of Abrian's most proficient students are now training their own students in their own respective styles, as it is in the tradition of Filipino Martial Arts. Henry Espero founded Rapido Realismo Martial Arts and teaches his art in Luneta every Sunday. Espero expresses high regard for Abrian and credits him as one of his main influences in creating Rapido Realismo. Many think Espero may be the next "top dog" in Luneta.

As successful as Espero may be, if not for Nepomuceno and the Australian, the pure form of Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral could be at a stand-still. Much effort is needed to continue and preserve an art in danger of extinction; one can only hope that Nepomuceno and the Australian manage to create a snowball effect in this aspect.

Question:

What is Eskrima and how can its techniques be properly preserved?

Definition and History of Eskrima

What is Eskrima?

Eskrima (sometimes spelled *escrima*) refers to a class of Filipino martial arts that emphasize stick and sword fighting. Some other commonly used terms include Kali and Arnis or Arnis de *mano* (harness of the hand), and occasionally the abbreviation FMA (Filipino Martial Arts). It should be noted however, that there is indeed a distinction Eskrima, Arnis, and Kali. This will be discussed in detail later on.

Eskrima is a "defense through offense-based art" (Wikipedia, 2007), meaning the best defense one can have is through the use of a good offense. There are styles of Eskrima suited to various terrains and body types, and countless systems exist within its umbrella, many of which can trace their origins to a single tribe or region. A number of these systems are listed briefly described in the Definition of Terms section of this paper. Outside of the Philippines, one will find that there are practitioners, schools, and systems of eskrima in the United Kingdom, Norway, Germany, Belgium, France, Spain, Italy, Brazil, Luxembourg, Poland, Venezuela, Canada, and Switzerland. The largest number of eskrima practitioners though, is based in the United States.

Eskrimadors are noted for their ability to fight with weapons or empty hands interchangeably. "Most Eskrima systems include fighting with a variety of weapons,

striking with hands and feet (Suntukan, Sikaran, Tadyakan/Tadiyakan), grappling and throwing (dumog), biting and whatever skills needed to complete a warriors training in the old days of tribal warfare” (Wikipedia, 2007). A skilled Eskrimador must be able to interchange weaponry depending on its availability, as well as fight with his empty hands should he be disarmed or caught in a compromising situation without a weapon. Eskrima covers all ranges of combat, and techniques and strategies are oftentimes lethal. The art does not make use of official rankings as other martial arts do. Practitioners are either students or teachers, there is no in between. Titles such as Tuhon, Grandmaster, Guro, Instructor, etc. are utilized to rank the seniority of the instructor. Locally, titles such as Mang and Tatang are more commonly when referring to a master of the art.

The triangle is one of the most important symbols in Filipino martial arts; it is one of the strongest geometrical structures and is used in Filipino martial arts to represent strength, and to describe many theories in the Filipino martial arts. Some of these theories include footwork, stances, foundations of disarms, and theories of attack.

The various aspects of this indigenous martial art such as its history, technical aspects, esoteric traditions, unique training methods, and its various systems, among other things are elaborated on further in the below sections.

Eskrima, Arnis, or Kali?

There seems to be a wide confusion over the differences that exist between the arts of Eskrima, Arnis and Kali. Since clear definitions based in research have not been forthcoming, many go so far as to claim the arts must all be one and the same; this it not so.

The arts of Eskrima and Arnis developed during different time periods in Philippine history - Eskrima during the Spanish occupation and Arnis after the Second World War. The masters of different systems of Eskrima and Arnis, however, took to interchanging the names of their arts whenever one term became more popular than the other. While retaining the descriptive part of their art's name, they switched from Eskrima to Arnis and back when they deemed it commercially viable to do so. Consequently, people assume that because the terms seem to be interchangeable, the arts must be too. The term “Kali” on the other hand, was first used by Placido Yambao in the late 1950's and 1960's as a shortened term for many stick fighting arts of the Philippines; it was then made popular through the late Floro Villabrille's teachings in the United States (Wiley, 2001). People then came to believe that “Kali” represented a parent form of Eskrima and Arnis. In fact, “there are no available written records that describe what the allegedly pre-Hispanic martial art of Kali really was, nor is there evidence to prove that Eskrima is even related to the “the art of Kali” (Nepangue, 2001). Today, although seldom used and most in a few areas in the Southern Philippines, the term “Kali” is gaining more acceptance and popularity thanks in due part to the influence of foreigners who more commonly use this term to describe the art (Wikipedia, 2007). We must remember though, that while the term “Kali” is frequently used as a general term representing the vast assortment of Filipino martial arts, it is in fact just the name of one specific system (Wiley, 2001).

The Colonial Period

As it is with most martial arts, Eskrima's history is surrounded by legends; and the pinpointing of facts when trying to track down its history and origins are extremely difficult. This is especially true for Eskrima since a large bulk of its history is oral and anecdotal. Eskrima was a martial art for the common man who many times lacked the scholarly education to create a written history for his art.

This confusion is further complicated by the fact that there are actually many different fighting systems with different histories that are called Eskrima (or Arnis de Mano). The most commonly accepted explanation for the origin of Eskrima systems is that they were originally the fighting systems possessed by every tribe in the Philippines and used by them to fight and defend against each other. But the fact is that the Spaniards had burnt almost all of the arts history that have been written down; for that reason we end up having to rely on oral stories for most of the arts' history.

It is said that the first text to mention Filipino martial arts is *Maragtas*, believed to have been written in A.D. 1250 by Datu Sumakwel, yet no original text, or even an ancient copy of *Maragtas* has been found. Although a number of scholars have proven *Maragtas* to be contemporary text passed off as a historical document, some legends in its contents are still part of the generally accepted history of Panay. According to *Maragtas*, it was at this central Philippine island that the Filipino art of Eskrima was originally structured and developed.

Proof of the existence of Filipino martial arts during the time of Ferdinand Magellan's discovery of the Philippines is found in the events of the battle of Mactan on April 27, 1521, wherein the native Filipino warriors used their indigenous martial arts to kill Magellan and defeat the Spanish conquistadors. Antonio Pigafeta, the official chronicler of the voyage, describes the event in the text *Magellan's Voyage: A Narrative Account of the First Circumnavigation*.

According to the text, Lapulapu and his mandirigma (warriors) repelled the Spanish invaders armed with their *kampilan* (long, dual-pointed cutlass), *sibat* (spears), *sinugba sa apoy* (sticks hardened with fire), and *kalasag* (protective shields). The low tide forced Magellan and his men into a hand-to-hand battle instead of a ship-based bombardment, resulting in his death. It must be noted that it was at this time that the Spanish methods of employing the rapier and dagger were taken to the Philippines.

The Filipinos were to experience conflict with foreigners yet again some fifty years later, during the battles against the feared Chinese pirate Limahong and his Japanese counterpart, Sioco. Though the Filipinos and the Chinese had been trading with each other since the ninth century, these battles marked the first time that the Filipino engaged the Chinese in hand-to-hand combat, as well as the first time that the Filipino had seen the Japanese technique of swordplay which they were to encounter later on during World War II. It was also the first time that the Filipino fought alongside the Spanish, when not contesting with, their own people for tribal property. Consequently, these encounters allowed the Filipino warriors to experience first hand how their martial arts stood against that fighting arts of three countries: Spain, China, and Japan.

In 1637, the Spanish friars created the *komedya*; socio-religious plays depicting the victory of the Christian Spaniards over the Muslim Moors of Africa. The *komedya* was used as propaganda by the Spanish friars to spread Catholicism throughout the Philippines by showing the superiority of the Christian faith over pagan beliefs. The

Filipinos viewed these plays as a mechanism by which they could practice their martial arts under the guise of undisruptive entertainment.

In 1764, Lieutenant-Governor Don Simon de Anda y Salazar prohibited the brandishing of the dagger and bolo (general utility knife) in the hopes of preventing future revolts by limiting the Filipino's access to bladed weapons. From that time onwards, sticks were used to simulated daggers and swords and the arts of Eskrima were practiced with long and short sticks in the central and northern Philippines. The Filipino was thus unable to practice their native martial arts as they once had.

Having to use sticks as simulators for blades, new students of such arts had some difficulty visualizing cutting opponents with wooden implements. These sticks, however, brought about a new kind of combat; they made it possible to defend against strikes with force-to-force blocks and one could now disarm an opponent by grabbing their opponent's weapon. These were actions impossible to perform when using the sharp steel blades once used for Eskrima. The Spaniards who witnessed a fight between Filipino stick fighters in the Visayas coined the term *esgrima* (the Spanish word for fencing) to refer to the art. Occasionally, the arts of Eskrima were also referred to as *estoque* or *estocada* (after the use of the *estoc* sword), and *fraile* (since fencing was a favorite past time of the Spanish friars in Manila).

The book *De Los Delitos* (Of the Crimes), which was written in 1800 by Don Baltazar Gonzalez, credits Datu Mangal with bringing the art of Kali Mactan Island, and Sri Bataugong and his son Sri Bantug Lamay, with later bringing the art to Cebu. Mangal's son, Rajah Lapulapu developed a fighting system called *pangamut*, which consisted of six slashes (i.e. to the head, chest, and kidneys – both left and right sides), and two thrusts (i.e. to the face and abdominal region).

By 1853, *Arnes de Mano*, a term used by the Spanish friars to describe the ornate trappings on the komedya actors' costumes, became a new name for the hidden artistic expressions of Eskrima movements. That same year, *Arnes de Mano* was abbreviated to (and accepted as) *Arnis* after it was mentioned in the epic poem "Florante at Laura" by Laurate Francisco "Balagtas" Baltazar. A line in the poem reads; "*Larong buno't arnes na kinakitaan ng kanikaniyang liksi't karunungan*" (the arts of buno and Arnis displayed each one's skill and knowledge).

According to Placido Yambao, the late 1800's saw the opening of the Tanghalan ng Sandata (Hall of Weapons) in the Ateneo de Manila high school, through the efforts of a man named Don Jose de Azes. The arts of fencing and Arnis were taught at the Tanghalan as gentleman's hobbies, and it is believed that some of the country's national heroes, including Jose Rizal and Juan Luna, trained there.

The Twentieth Century

On September 28, 1901, after the battle at Tirad Pass and the capture of General Emilio Aguinaldo, 200 knife-wielding Filipino guerillas attacked Company C of the Ninth Infantry at the Balangiga Port, Samar Island. The infantry was an American regiment with recent combat experience in Cuba, Manila, and China. Equipped with standard issue Krag rifles and .38 caliber Colt revolvers, Company C was almost completely annihilated at the hands of the bolo-wielding Filipinos.

In the decades to come, "great men like Pilar and Aguinaldo were replaced by *tulisanes* (bandits) and Moro Juramentados (Muslim religious fanatics who waged quasi-

jiḥād)” (Wiley, 1996). The Juramentados would tie strips of rawhide around their extremities, making ready-made tourniquets that deadened the pain and slowed the loss of blood; hence halting the immediate onslaught of shock should they be cut or shot. Then they would run, in a murderous frenzy with their kris or barong; through an area populated with Christians and kill whoever stood their paths. They saw running Juramentado as an oath and religious rite. The notoriety of these Moros was such that the United States Marines enacted two specific measures for protection against them; they adopted the use of leather-lined collars (which earned them the nickname “leathernecks”) to prevent from being decapitated by the Moro’s blades. Also, it was not uncommon for American officers to fire an entire round of .38 caliber bullets into a Moro and not stop him. As a result, the Colt .45 automatic pistol became standard issue for American servicemen fighting in the Philippines.

For decades, Filipino martial arts continued to exist throughout the constant turmoil of the country’s political situation. It reemerged as a subculture that began to gain momentum in Cebu in the 1920’s. In 1920, the late Venancio “Anciong” Bacon, the founder of Balintawak Arnis, opened the Labangon Fencing Club, which was the first “commercial” Arnis club in Cebu. Thereafter, Johnny Chiuten, Pedring Romo, and the famous Cañete brothers also began openly teaching their respective styles of stick-fighting. The first full-contact Arnis tournaments were held in the Philippine Olympic Stadium. Placido Yambao reigned as champion in the late 1920’s and 1930’s, and thirty years later he wrote the first book on Arnis. It was also at this time that the United States caught its first glimpse of Filipino fighting arts; Ramiro A Estalilla, Sr., began teaching Rigonan-Estalilla Kabaroan at the Minneapolis Athletic Club in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

In the 1932, the various masters in Cebu and the neighboring islands came together in the interest of perpetuating the Filipino martial arts, resulting in the organization of the famed Doce Pares Association. Mark Wiley calls the Doce Pares Association “the oldest and longest standing martial arts organization in the Philippines” and “a driving force behind the reemergence of Filipino martial arts into Filipino society” (Wiley, 1996). Benjamin Luna Lema founded the Lighting Arnis Club in Mambusao, Capiz in 1937, and in 1947 was requested by the United States Air Force to instruct their enlisted men in hand-to-hand combat.

In 1957, Placido Yambao wrote the first book solely dedicated to the history and practice of Filipino martial arts. *Mga Karunungan sa Larung Arnis* (Knowledge in the Art of Arnis) was published in Tagalog by the University of the Philippines. The book was the first major work on Filipino martial arts proper and the first to classify them as a single art; distinguishing the variety of Filipino martial arts by regional dialect alone and not by the technical characteristics of their physical movements. The art of Arnis had never had so much exposure before, and the book caused quite a stir among Filipino martial arts practitioners, as they still regarded the art as a secret weapon in their battle against oppression.

Interest in the Filipino martial arts increased in the next decade as schools and styles opened themselves up to the public. The revival in Manila was instigated by the Samahan ng Arnis sa Pilipinas (Association of Arnis in the Philippines). In 1963, the Association sponsored the First National Arnis Festival. It was the first occasion that the Filipino martial arts were televised. Three years later, Angel Cables, with the assistance of Max Sarmiento and Dentoy Revillar, opened the first “commercial” Eskrima academy

in the United States in Stockton, California. Bakbakan International was founded in Manila 1968 as a brotherhood for martial artists in the Philippines. Since its inception it has promoted Filipino martial arts around the world by opening clubs, sponsoring seminars, editing and publishing books and newsletters and producing instructional video tapes. In the next year, Colonel Arsenio de Borja, then director and secretary-treasurer of the Philippines Amateur Athletic Federation, pushed for the inclusion of arnis in the curriculum of the physical education at Manila's College of Physical Education.

The 1970's was another important decade in the growth and spread of Filipino martial arts: In the early seventies the Lapunti Self-Defense Club was founded by Felimon Caburnay, Napoleon "Nap" Fernandez Founded the art of Yaw-Yan (an acronym for *sayaw ng kamatayan*), and Leo T. Gaje founded the Arnis America Organization in New York City. Later, General Fabian Ver organized and became the first president of the National Arnis Federation of the Philippines (NARAPHIL), and Crispulo "Ising" Atillo founded the Philippine Arnis Confederation, and the Cebu Escrima Association was formed. The United States also had its first full-contact arnis tournament at this time.

Despite best intentions, things were not going very smoothly in the world of the Filipino martial arts. Many schools became rivals and members were constantly fighting one another. In 1976, the Cebu Escrima Association, in association with NARAPHIL, sponsored the First National Arnis Convention and the First Asian Martial Arts Festival. Perhaps the most successful association founded in the seventies however, was the Tres Personas Arnis de Mano Association founded by Timoteo Maranga.

In the United States in 1977, Dan Inosanto published *The Filipino Martial Arts*, the most widely distributed book on Filipino martial arts at the time. Two years later, NARAPHIL sponsored the First Open Arnis Tournament in Cebu City, and the First National Invitational Arnis Tournament in Manila.

In the eighties a number of tournaments were held to further establish arnis as a sport. The Third National Arnis Tournament was held in Cebu City, the Fourth National was held in Bacolod in the following year, and the Philippine Grand Kali Championship was held from May 26-29, 1989. Both events were jointly sponsored by the Kali Association of the Philippines and the Armed Forces of the Philippines. In 1987, the World Kali-Eskrima-Arnis Foundation (WEKAF) was established in response to the worldwide spread of Filipino martial arts. The First United States National Eskrima-Kali-Arnis Championships was in San Jose, California in 1988, and the First Easter USA Eskrima-Kali-Arnis Championships was held in New Jersey the following year. Then, on August 11-13, 1989, WEKAF sponsored the First World Kali-Eskrima-Arnis Championships in Cebu City, Philippines.

One of the best known masters of arnis in the Western World is Remy Presas. Presas, who first gained popularity in the United States in 1983 with the publication of his third book *Modern Arnis: Filipino Art of Stick Fighting*, became known as the "Father of Modern Arnis" and has since amassed a larger base of students around the world than any other single Filipino Master.

In 1991, Arnis Philippines became the "official" government-sponsored organization to spread the art of arnis and the thirty-third member of the Philippine Olympic Committee. Through this organization's efforts, arnis was featured as a demonstration sport in the 1991 Southeast Asian Games (SEA Games). It then formed the

International Arnis Federation which brought thirty countries together to work toward the acceptance of arnis as a demonstration sport in the Olympic Games. With arnis now the national sport of the Philippines, the Senate Committee on Youth and Sports Development, the Philippine Sports Commission, and the Philippine Olympic Committee jointly sponsored and endorsed the Grand Exhibition of Martial Arts in Manila. The event was held in July, 1993, and featured demonstrations by practitioners of Sikaran, Kali Ilustrisimo, Sagasa, Arnis Lanada, Praying Mantis Kung-fu, Pencak Silat, Hwarangdo, Hsin-i Liu Ha Pa Fa, Ngo Cho Kun, and Kyokushin-Kai Karate.

Eskrima Technical Aspects

Bantay-Kamay or the Live Hand

The bantay-kamay in Eskrima refers to the opposite or empty hand; that which does not hold the main weapon. It is called the “live hand” or the secondary weapon because it is used actively in combat for checking, blocking, striking, and as support to disarm and locks. It is the live hand that is the major player in the success and efficiency of many of Filipino Martial Arts’ techniques.

Weapons

The most common material for sticks and staves is rattan, a cheap wood from a type of vine found in the Philippines. Its qualities of being hard and durable yet lightweight make it an ideal training tool for Eskrima. It can be hardened with fire, and does not splinter like other woods do. This characteristic also makes it useful for defending against blades. Kamagong or Ironwood is also used occasionally, but as it is dense enough to cause serious injury it is not usually used for sparring. Figure 1.1 shows us the typical baston used in training for Eskrima.

A collection of common training weapons are displayed. Included are a padded stick, a rattan stick, a wooden training knife, and a collection of aluminum training knives.



Typical Eskrima rattan sticks



Common training weapons for Eskrima

There are other materials used to make training (and sometimes dueling) sticks such as bahi (heart of the palm) and molave, which are burned and hardened. Modern high-impact plastics and aluminum may also be used. The sticks may also be padded for training purposes, although this practice is only used in schools in North America or Europe.

The lengths of the sticks are usually around the length of the practitioners arm, but may vary from about 45 cm to 70 cm. While some schools prefer sticks of a particular length, others expect students to learn techniques that are appropriate for a variety of lengths. Some systems are known to specialize in other weapons such as the whip (latigo) and staff. Below are some common weapon preferences according to Edgar Sulite of Lameco Eskrima (Sulite, 1993):

1. Solo baston (single stick)
2. Doble baston (double stick)
3. Espada y Daga (sword and dagger)
4. Solo Daga (single dagger)

Strikes

Most Filipino systems focus on defend against particular angles of attack rather than strikes because, theoretically, virtually all types of attacks will hit or reach a combatant via these angles of attack. Older systems gave each angle a different name but more recent systems simply numbered them. Most systems have twelve standard angles of attack (the Doce Tero), some have as few as five (the Cinco Teros), and some as many as 72.

The exact angles, the order in which they are numbered and the manner in which they are executed vary per system, and most are based on Filipino cosmology. Below is an example of the twelve angles of attack in the Lameco Eskrima system, and Figure 1.3 shows yet another set of angles for another system.

Example:

The 12 Strikes of Lameco Eskrima (Sulite, 1993)

- Strike No. 1 - left ear (left side of the head)
- Strike No. 2 - right knee
- Strike No. 3 - left knee
- Strike No. 4 - right ear (right side of the head)
- Strike No. 5 - thrust to the stomach
- Strike No. 6 - right elbow
- Strike No. 7 - left elbow
- Strike No. 8 - thrust to the solar plexus
- Strike No. 9 - strike to the left collar bone
- Strike No. 10 - strike to the left collar bone
- Strike No. 11 - thrust to the heart
- Strike No. 12 - strike to the crown/head



The Cinco Teros

The Cinco Teros pertains to the five cardinal strikes found within the Doce Tero. The reason for the existence of the Cinco Teros (that being five strikes taught sometimes separately from the 12 strikes) is that the most lethal of strikes within the Doce Tero can be found within the Cinco Teros.

Ranges

Most systems generally classify ranges into a least three categories: Corto or short range, Medio or medium range, and Largo mano or long range. Each range has its own characteristics and footwork, and some systems place more emphasis on certain ranges than others. Almost all however, recognize that being able to work and control any range is absolutely essential.

Good footwork is cardinal to being able to control the range. Most Eskrima systems explain their footwork in terms of triangles; generally, two feet occupy the two

corners of the triangle and a step is to the third corner. The shape and size of the triangle is adapted to the particular situation and the style of footwork and stance varies greatly from school to school and practitioner to practitioner. Very traditional schools that are very conscious of battlefield necessities teach stances that are generally very low, often with one knee on the ground, with complex footwork that involves cross-steps that allows the Eskrimador to cope with multiple opponents. On the other hand, systems that have been adapted to duels or sporting matches use simpler footwork that focuses on a single opponent.

Fighting Techniques

After a brief look at Eskrima's history, it is not surprising that many of its techniques are lethal and fatal. Experts who have written books on the matter have expressed much hesitation to include sections on knife fighting as they could be used by the wrong people in the wrong ways. Because the art is grounded in martial combat, not many restraining techniques are taught. Spirituality and martial virtue are not included in the curriculum of training for Eskrima; students attain this apart from their Eskrima training. Moreover, many of the techniques do not require strength or power. This is due to the fact that most of the power utilized in Eskrima is derived from body movement and the economy of motion.

Being that the two most commonly used weapons in Eskrima are the stick and the sword, Eskrima's stick techniques fall into two categories: one, the stick techniques that are used in training for sword fighting, and two, the stick techniques that are used in the training for stick fighting. The curriculum of most systems, are designed so that practitioners may adapt their training to either weapon. Other weapons traditionally included in Eskrima training are spears, shields, whips, and flails (called *nunchaku* in Okinawan martial arts).

Subsections of Eskrima

There are several sub-disciplines in Eskrima, and special terminology is used to refer to them. Some schools or systems teach separate classes in these disciplines, while some schools or systems focus on only one. Some of Eskrima's sub-disciplines are listed below:

- *Baraw* - the use of a knife
- *Corto, Medio, and Largo Mano* - techniques aimed at fighting at short, medium, and long range, respectively
- *Doble baston* - the use of a pair of sticks
- *Dumog* - a grappling style with an emphasis on disabling or control of the opponent by manipulation of the head and neck.
- *Espada y daga*, the use of a sword and knife (often simulated with a stick and a wooden knife)
- *Gunting* - armed and unarmed scissoring techniques aimed at disabling an opponent's arm or hand
- *Panantukan* or *Panuntukan* - Filipino kickboxing
- *Pangamut* or *Mano mano* - empty hand techniques
- *Sibat* - the use of a spear
- *Sinawali* - weaving attacks with two sticks

- *Solo baston* - the use of a single stick

Training

Traditionally, training for Eskrima begins with two weapons; either a pair of sticks or a stick and a wooden knife (known as *espada y daga*, Spanish for “sword and dagger”). This type of training is justified by pointing out that a warrior would not have gone into battle with an empty hand. It is not uncommon for Filipinos (especially in rural areas) to carry knives. Further, having two weapons forces the practitioner into using both hands, which is important even when working with one weapon. The extra hand (sometimes called the “free hand”) is used to control the opponent’s weapon and to strike when the range is adequately close.

The benefits of learning weaponry first is that it significantly increases the coordination needed for empty hand applications; the premise for this being that weapons are merely extensions of one’s limbs. Muscle memory is an important aspect of Eskrima training; an Eskrimador must be able to effectively execute stick fighting techniques with empty hands should he be caught in a compromising situation without a weapon, or lose one. To the Eskrimador, weapons are simply extensions of his body, thus the same angles and footwork are used with or without a weapon. This one feature is the most obvious difference one can see when comparing Eskrima to other martial arts, wherein empty hand techniques are taught first and one may only engage in weaponry after having advanced to higher levels which sometimes takes years.

In training for Eskrima, students are taught sparring from the start. Students are taught to spar at short, long, and grappling ranges, with a variety of weapons. According to Black Eagle Eskrima, Eskrima is probably one of the only martial arts where sparring against multiple opponents is successfully trained. Most Eskrima systems develop weapon and empty hands skills in tandem using training methods intended to emphasize their common elements.

It must be noted however, that in Filipino martial arts, change is a welcome thing. Although students train with their instructors in various systems, they are encouraged to develop their own styles, to take what is useful and tailor it to their body movements and structure, in order to utilize each at its maximum capacity. For instance, a six-foot tall Eskrimador would hardly be encouraged to pursue training for a system that emphasizes crouching stances, while a four-foot tall man would not benefit so much from long range fighting techniques as he would from short range styles. Both Abrian and Laurena mentioned that students should not be copycats of their masters.

Drills

There are several classes of exercises initially presented to the public by the Inosanto system as a set of organized drills designed to allow partners to move quickly and experiment with variations while remaining same. Some examples are the *sumbrada*, *hubud-lubud*, and *sinawali*. In a *sumbrada* drill taken from the Villabrille system, one partner feeds an attack while the other counters, flowing into a counterattack, which is again countered, flowing once more into a counterattack, and so on. The *hubud-lubud* drill taken from the Doce Pares system is used as a type of “generator” drill wherein one is forced to act and think while fists are already flying.

At first, students learn a specific series of attacks, counters, and counterattacks. As students advance, they can switch to completely different attacks, change the

footwork, or add minor variations. In due course, the exercise becomes almost entirely free-form. Take-downs, disarms, and other techniques usually break the continuity of a drill, but are typically practiced in beginning from a sequence of movements so as to force the student to become accustomed to a variety of situations. A common practice is to begin the drill with both partners armed with two weapons. Once the drill is flowing, if a student sees an opportunity to disarm their opponent, they will, but the drill continues until both partners are empty handed.

Rhythm, while an essential part of drills, is given more emphasis in the United States. A regular beat serves as a guide for students to follow to ensure the safety of the participants. Most drills are done at a constant pace, which is increased as the students progress. Eskrima in the Philippines is practiced without a rhythm, sometimes even offbeat or completely out of rhythm.

In every system of Eskrima there exists the multi-directional drill used as shadowboxing against multiple opponents. Espero calls it the “true movement of Arnis”. In the Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral system it is called the Rapelon, while other systems call it amarra, and yet others call it the Redunda. There are two kinds of Rapelons: the solo Rapelon, meaning one turn of the stick or blade, and doble Rapelon meaning two turns of the stick or blade.

Attire

Because of poverty and to hide their skills, Filipino Eskrimadors use their everyday clothes when training. Training in everyday clothing is encouraged in some systems because Eskrimadors should be comfortable and accustomed enough to fight in their everyday clothes. The more affluent and modernized city practitioners and foreigners train in their studio; uniform, a gi, or ¾ length pants.

Tradition and Eskrima

Classical Eskrimadors, unlike kung fu fanatics and such, pay only scant attention to the genealogical charts of their styles, for the classical Eskrimador stands on his own abilities. He prefers, “teachers who shine by their own light, like the sun, rather than planets that shine by the reflected light of their school or teacher” (Reyes, 1999). For this reason, many founders of Eskrima systems claim to have created their own styles rather than to have inherited them.

Traditional Eskrima masters, upon being approached by a student would say, “*Yes, I will teach you the little that I know*”, and then demonstrate his skills. If the student likes what he sees, then he can opt to stay and learn more. It is unheard of for an Eskrima master to proclaim himself “the 10th degree master of Rabid Dog Arnis appointed by the grandmaster” or something to that degree. Ironically, students of Eskrima become masters only by self-appointment. The traditional Eskrimador only begins to teach when he feels he is ready to do so, because the traditional Eskrima master would never appoint him as successor no matter how able the student is. The reason for this is that once an Eskrimador starts to teach, he is open to life-and-death challenges. Or more accurately, “A master who...appoints him [his student] as his successor, effectively signs the death warrant for that student” (Reyes, 1999).

Eskrima in the Army

Leo Gaje, head of Pekiti Tirsia Kali (which was founded in 1897), is well known for his appearance in a law enforcement video used to train American Special Forces. Pekiti Tirsia Kali is also taught to the Force-Recon Marine Battalions of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Special Action Force (SAF) contingent of the Philippine National Police. Eskrima is also used by the in the United States by the Navy SEALs, Special Forces, members of the United States Special Operations Command, the Army Rangers, members of the San Diego Border Patrol (California), the Tactical Response Systems (California), members of the Wauwatosa Police Department (Wichita), members of the Madrid Police Department (Iowa), and by the members of the Queensland Police Service in Australia, and in Dynamic Self Defense systems in Alberta, Canada.

Eskrima in Popular Culture

One of the better known, if not the most famous of masters of Eskrima, Dan Inosanto, taught Eskrima to Bruce Lee. Inosanto helped increase the popularity of Eskrima by using his skills in the “Filipino sticks” in movies such as *The Sensei*, *Game of Death*, and *Barb Wire*.

The Sayoc Kali choreography unit is responsible for the combat scenes in movies such as *The Hunted* and *Confessions of a Dangerous Mind*. Eskrima was also used by Matt Damon in films such as *The Bourne Identity* and *Bourne Supremacy*. The movies *Mission Impossible 3* and *Lara Croft Tomb Raider: The Cradle of Life* feature fight scenes in which Angelina Jolie and Tom Cruise use rattan sticks, Milla Jovovich was also taught Eskrima for the movie *Resident Evil: Apocalypse*, as with Vin Diesel for *The Chronicles of Riddick* series of movies and Lucy Liu for the movie *Ballistic: Ecks vs. Sever*. Eskrima is also used in the movie *Equilibrium*, in the video games *Mortal Kombat*, *Mortal Kombat Conquest*, *Double Dragon Advance*, and by DC Comics characters *Night Wing* and *Oracle*.

Interviews: By Alejandro Abrian

Mr. Amie Balgoa, Pit Supervisor, Hyatt Casino and Hotel and student, Moro Moro Orabes Heneral - Interview (Luneta, Jan 2007)

Mr. Henry Espero, Founder, Rapido Realismo Martial Arts, and student, Moro Moro Orabes Heneral - Interview (Luneta, Jan 2007)

Mr. Boy Laurena, student, Moro Moro Orabes Heneral - Interview (Luneta, Jan 2007)

Mr. Amie Balgoa, Pit Supervisor, Hyatt Casino and Hotel and student, Moro Moro Orabes Heneral - Interview (Luneta, Jan 2007)

Can you tell us a little bit about Eskrima?

Tagalog: “*Ang Eskrima ay gumagamit ng iba’t ibang klase ng... tulad ng sticks (Arnis), itak.. o pwede rin yung mga iba’t ibang pwedeng gamitin tulad ng payong...*”

English: (In Eskrima, you can use a variety of different things... like sticks for Arnis, or a machete... or you could also use other things like an umbrella...)

What are the 12 strikes?

Tagalog: “...nagagamit ito sa iba’t ibang parte ng katawan mula ulo hanggang paa. Unang tinitira sa Moro Moro [Orabes Heneral], ang ulo, tapos paa...”

English: (These are used on the different parts of the body, from the head to the feet. In Moro Moro [Orabes Heneral], you strike the head first, and then the feet...)

What is Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral?

Tagalog: “Ang salitang ‘Moro Moro’ ay derived from yung mga sayaw ng moro moro noong araw – mga palabas na ginaganap tuwing fiesta. Si Mang Andy isa sa mga gumaganap...”

Kinaiiba ng Moro Moro Orabes [Heneral] sa ibang styles, tuloy tuloy yung movements, di katulad sa ibang martial arts na may mga numero na sinusunod.”

English: (The term ‘Moro Moro’ is derived from the moro moro dances from the old days - the dances that take place during fiestas. Mang Andy was one of the dancers...

What makes Moro Moro Orabes [Heneral] different from other styles is that the movements are continuous, unlike in other martial arts wherein a number system is used.”)



Mr. Amie Balgoa

What is the Cinco Teros?

Tagalog: “Limang klaseng strikes ito, mula ulo hanggang dito (motions to half of body).”

English: (These are five kinds of strikes, starting from the head to the waist.)

What is the Rapelon?

Tagalog: “Usually two sticks ang ginagamit. Both right hand and left hand yan...”

English: (Usually, two sticks are used in the Rapelon - one in each hand.)

What are the techniques and strategies used in Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral?

Tagalog: “Di kita ang strikes nyan, kasi maliit si Mang Andy. Sa Moro Moro, low ang stance, pero pwede rin mataas...”

English: (Because Mang Andy is short, you cannot really see the strikes [in Moro Moro Orabes Heneral]. A low stance is used in Moro Moro [Orabes Heneral], but a high stance can be used as well.)

What important things did you learn from Moro Moro Orabes Heneral?

Tagalog: “Ang tamang paggalaw...kasi yung sa Moro Moro, flexible yan. Kahit magpunta ka sa kaliwa o sa kanan...Tamang stance rin natutunan ko. At tsaka yun...yung flexibility.”

English: (The right way to move...Because Moro Moro [Orabes Heneral] is a flexible style. You can move to the right and to the left. I also learned the correct stance [to fight in], and flexibility.)

Have you studied and other forms of martial arts?

Tagalog: *“Nag-aral ako ng Aikido, at tsaka Karate kaso di ko nagustuhan.”*

English: (I studied Aikido. I also studied Karate, but I didn’t like it.)

What advantages does Eskrima have over other martial arts?

Tagalog: *“Ang Eskrima, gumagamit ng iba-ibang bagay... so advantage din yun na marunong kang gumamit...”*

English: (You can use a variety of things when fighting with Eskrima... so it can be considered an advantage that you know how to use a variety of things [when fighting])

When did you start studying Eskrima?

Tagalog: *“Sa Manila, sa 1990, kaya lang di tuloy tuloy...nauna ako nag-aral kay Ilustrisimo...”*

English: (I started in Manila in 1990, but I didn’t train continuously... I first studied with Ilustrisimo.)

Can you tell us a little about the current state of Filipino martial arts and your hope for its future?

Tagalog: *“Kulang ang suporta ng gobyerno para umunlad ang mapaganda ang practice ng martial arts, lalong lalo na ang Arnis ay galing pa naman dito...”*

English: (There isn’t enough support from the government for the progress of the practice of martial arts, most especially Arnis, since it came from here...)

Have you ever used your skills in real life?

Tagalog: *“Hindi pa naman, kasi dapat rin iwasan ang paggamit nito... hangga’t kakayanin i-control... gusto rin natin ng kapayapaan diba?”*

English: (Not yet, because we should also avoid using our skills... we should try to control it as much as we can... as much as possible, we want freedom, right?)

Any advice for those who want to study Eskrima?

Tagalog: *“Maganda yung may alam ka [sa martial arts], kasi confident ka sa sarili mo. Kahit sa aksidente, nagagamit mo ang kaalaman mo.*

Halimbawa, dati nagbibisikleta ako at biglang bumaliktad yung bisikleta ko. Kung di ako nakapag-aral ng martial arts di ako makapag-rolling... actually, di ako nasaktan. So hindi lang sa martial arts nagagamit yan.”

English: (It’s good to have some skills [in martial arts], because it gives you confidence. You can even use your knowledge [in martial arts] in accidents.

For example, I was on my bicycle once when it suddenly turned over. If I weren’t able to study martial arts then I wouldn’t have been able to roll. Actually, I didn’t get hurt. So, your skills are applied to things other than martial arts.)



Mr. Henry Espero, Founder, Rapido Realismo Martial Arts, and student, Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral - Interview (Luneta, Jan 2007)

What is Eskrima?

Tagalog: *“Ang Eskrima, laro ng mga Pilipino yan. Sabi nila, galing daw sa Southern Philippines yan, pero sa research ko, nalaman ko galing yung Eskrima sa Luzon. Laro ng mga Christian ito, di laro ng mga Muslim. Sa mga Muslim, walang Arnis. Gamit nila kris, tsaka silat sila. Sa mga Visayas, andyan ang Eskrima.”*

English: (Eskrima is a Filipino martial art. They say Eskrima came from the Southern Philippines, but I have found in my research that it came from Luzon. It is a Christian martial art, not a Muslim martial art. The Muslims don't use Arnis. They use the kris sword, and the art of silat. You can also find Eskrima in the Visayas.)



Mr. Henry Espero

What kinds of weapons are used in Eskrima?

Tagalog: *“Andyan ang yantok, pero pwede rin bladed. Iba pagka edged weapon, iba rin pag yantok – iba ang galaw nyan. Pag bladed, pwedeng kahit mahina ang pag-execute ng strike, pag yantok, dapat malakas.”*

English: (You can use yantok (rattan sticks), or bladed weapons. The movements are different when using rattan sticks are different from those when using edged weapons. The execution of a strike when using bladed weapons doesn't have to be too hard, but hard strikes are needed when using rattan sticks.)



What is the Cinco Teros?

Tagalog: *“Limang strike yan: isa sa gitna, dalawa sa kanan, dalawa sa kaliwa. Isang thrust sa gitna, taas baba sa kanan, taas baba rin sa kaliwa.”*

English: (Those are five strikes: one in the middle, two on the right, two on the left. One thrust in the middle, up and down on the right side, and up and down on the left side.)

I heard certain systems of Eskrima are more suited for certain body types. Can you tell us more about this?

Tagalog: *“Ang [mga estilo ng] Eskrima, may binabagayan, nasa galaw yan at sa structure ng katawan. Yung mga malaki, di pwede sa crouching [na estilo]...”*

English: (Certain styles of Eskrima suit some more than others, depending on your movements and body structure. Tall people cannot do styles that emphasize crouching.)

I hear Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral is a style best suited for shorter people. Being a tall guy, how do you work with its low stance?

Tagalog: *“Sa practice yan. Kung hindi ka nagpa-practice, yung mga ibang mga galaw, di mo talaga magagawa. Pero ang Moro Moro [Orabes Heneral], bagay talaga yan sa maliit. Kasi kung maliit lalo ka pang lumiliit [pag naka-crouch ka]...mahirap tamaan yan...”*

English: (Through practice. If you do not practice, you will not be able to do some moves. Moro Moro [Orabes Heneral] though, is really best suited for shorter people. Because if you're short, [when you are crouched down] you get even shorter... it will be hard to hit you, then.)

What are the advantages of learning Eskrima?

Tagalog: *“May kanya-kanyang estilo ng Eskrima pag nasa lugar...minsan maputik... pwede sa madulas yung paglalabanan mo, o kaya sa bulubundukin...”*

English: (There are different styles of Eskrima suited to different terrains... sometimes it's muddy... you can also fight on slippery surfaces, or on rocky surfaces.)

What are the disadvantages of learning Eskrima?

Tagalog: *“Kung di mo talaga alam yung ginagawa mo, yung ang disadvantage mo. Halimbawa kung yuyuko ka tapos malaki ka... dapat alam mo yung ginagawa mo... Pagka ang technique, ginamit ng isang baguhan, delikado para sa kanya kasi di niya alam ang pagpapatuloy ng galaw. Pero kung ang gumagamit ay marunong, o kung alam niya ang ginagawa niya, maganda yun kasi lumalabas na parang nilinlinlang mo yung kalaban.”*

English: (It is to your own disadvantage if you really don't know what you are doing. For example, if you crouch down despite being a tall person... you should know what you're doing... It's dangerous when someone new to Eskrima uses a technique, because he does not know how to follow through on his moves. It's better if the one executing the moves already knows Eskrima, because then it will just be like confusing your opponent.)

Can you describe the training the one undergoes when learning Eskrima?

Tagalog: *“Dahil baguhan ka, mag-uumpisa ka muna sa walang hawak. Ang mga galaw ng empty hand, pagka nilagyan mo ng armas yun, halos yung galing sa empty hand andun di sa may weapons.”*

English: (Because you are a new student, you start with empty hand techniques. The moves used for empty hand techniques can also be used with weapons, almost every move used in empty hand techniques are also applicable to those that use weapons.)

So it isn't true that weapon training comes first when learning Eskrima?

Tagalog: *“Ewan ko sa kanila! Sa pagtuturo ko, empty hand ang nauuna. Minsan kasi sa pagtuturo mo ay may matatamaan.”*

English: (I don't know! When I teach, empty hand techniques come first.



Sometimes, people do get hit when you are teaching them...)

When did you start studying Eskrima?

1980's, with Antonio Ilustrisimo and Mang Juan of Automatic Arnis.

Have you studied and other martial arts?

Tagalog: *"Nag-aral ako ng Karate. Habang lumalawak ang kaalaman mo sa Arnis, meron kang nade-develop na mga bagong galaw. Noong nag-aral na ako ng Arnis, marami akong naging kaibigan... Mga boxingero... mga iba-ibang klase ng martial arts. Pero pangunahin dun yung boxing. Yung sparring partner ni Navarette, yun ang nagturo sa akin ng boxing. Tsaka yung tiyohin ni Espinosa, si Arning.*

Na-enhance yung kaalaman ko sa empty hand noong pinagsama ko yung Arnis at boxing."

English: (I studied Karate. As your knowledge of Arnis grows, you develop new moves. When I started studying Arnis, I gained a lot of friends...boxers... many different kinds of martial arts...primarily boxing. Navarette's sparring partner was the one who taught me boxing. As well as Espinosa's uncle, Arning.

My knowledge of empty hand techniques was enhanced when I put together the techniques of Arnis and boxing.)

What is Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral?

Tagalog: *"Laro ni Mang Andrew yan...laro ng mga Waray. Galing yan sa Visayas, sa Samar. Ang ibig sabihin ng Moro Moro, stageplay na ginagawa sa probinsya. Ang Heneral, ibig sabihin ay mataas. Ang Orabes naman ay mababa. Ang Orabes Heneral: palo sa taas, palo sa baba. Tuloy-tuloy ang galaw nyan, pwede sa baba, pwede sa taas. Pwede rin lahat taas, o lahat baba. Kung ano ang resulta ng huli mong galaw, ituloy-tuloy mo... Kung sa technique naman, wala siyang specific na daan ng baston.*

Ang Moro Moro [Orabes Heneral], bagay sa may talim... bagay sa edged weapon. Kasi kung crouching, malayo yung abot ng dulo ng weapon, nauuna yung talim. Kung nakatayo ka, maiksi lang abot mo.

Ang natatanging strategy ay ginagamit mo yung hips, balikat, ulo, tuhod, at calves. Halos lahat ng parte ng katawan nagagamit sa isang technique

...Natural lang ang galaw niya...ang natural na kilos ng tao pwedeng gamitin sa estilo ng [Moro Moro] Orabes Heneral."

English: (That is Mang Andrew's art... the art of the Warays. The art came from the Visayas region, specifically Samar. The term Moro Moro refers to the stageplays that take place in the province. The term Heneral means high, while Orabes means low. Orabes Heneral means strike high and strike low. The moves are continuous; they can be low or high. They can also be mostly high or mostly low. Whatever is the result of your last move will determine how you will follow through with your next move...

As for techniques, there are no specifics as to where the stick passes...

Moro Moro [Orabes Heneral] is best suited for edged weapons. When you are crouched down, the tip of your weapon reaches quite far. When you are standing up, your reach is somewhat limited.)

What is the rapelon?

Tagalog: *“Ang rapelon iba-iba yung tawag dyan. Yung iba ang tawag dyan ay amarra. Yan ang movement talaga ng Arnis... yun ang estilo. Kahit na anong aralin mo, yun ang magiging galaw.*

Dalawang klase yan: solo rapelon o solo redunda. Ibig sabihin nyan, one turn. At yung doble rapelon o doble redunda, dalawang turn naman yan. Pwedeng upward o downward yung turns.”

English: (There are many different names for the rapelon. Some call it amarra. It is the true body movement of Arnis...it is the style. No matter what style of Arnis you study, the movements come out like that.

There are two kinds: solo rapelon or solo redunda. That means one turn. And in doble rapelon or doble redunda, you use two turns. You can turn the stick upwards or downwards.)

Have you had any exposure to Eskrima prior to studying with the three masters you credit your style [Rapido Realismo] for?

Tagalog: *“Sa 1980’s ako nag-umpisa mag-aral pero bata pa ako nakikita ko na yung matatanda sa amin...nare-recall ko yung mga ginagawa nila. Kasi sa probinsya naming sa Sorsogon, ordinaryo lang ang may hawak na itak... ordinaryo sa mga bata yan. Magtatrabaho ka sa palayan, sa abaka, o sa pangingisda may dala kang itak.”*

English: (I started studying in the 1980’s but when I was a child I remember seeing the elders back home... I can recall what they were doing. In our province, Sorsogon, it is not uncommon for one to be holding a machete it is an ordinary thing for the children there. The itak is used when you work in the rice fields, in the trees, or while fishing.)

How has studying Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral helped you in the development of your style? [Rapido Realismo]

Tagalog: *“Maraming galaw sa Moro Moro [Orabes Heneral] ay magaganda, kaya di dapat kalimutan. Kung maaari at dagdagan at dagdagan pa. Isa na dyan yung crouching na stance, gaya nang pinakita ko kanina.”*

English: (There are many good moves in Moro Moro [Orabes Heneral], so they should not be forgotten. If possible, we should keep adding to them. One of the moves is the crouching stance that I showed you earlier.)

As Founder of Rapido Realismo [Martial Arts], what are your thoughts on the state of Eskrima today?

Tagalog: *“Maganda naman... May naturuan ako na taga-Norway. Nagtuturo na siya ngayon, nagtayo siya ng sarili niyang club doon. Meron din akong naturuan na taga Nevada, nagtayo din siya ng sarili niya... merong taga-Malaysia, Indonesia... Hetong darating na Marso may dadating na Amerikano...”*

English: (So far so good... I just taught someone from Norway. He put up his own club back home and is teaching Eskrima there. I also taught someone from Nevada, he too put up his own club... there was one from Malaysia, Indonesia... an American will be coming this March...)

What are your thoughts on Eskrima as a sport?

Tagalog: “*Sumasama kami sa demo, pero di sports. Sa sports, iba...sa totoong buhay tuloy tuloy ang atake. Sa sports, pagka tumama, stop na. Pabilisan makatama. May point system.*”

English: (We join demos, but do not engage in [Eskrima as] sports. In sports, things are different. In real life, attacks are continuous. In sports, they stop after each strike. Emphasis is on who strikes first. There is a point system.)



Have you ever used your skills in real life?

Tagalog: “*Maraming galaw sa Moro Moro [Orabes Heneral] ay magaganda, kaya di dapat kalimutan. Kung maaari at dagdagan at dagdagan pa. Isa na dyan yung crouching na stance, gaya nang pinakita ko kanina.*”

English: (There are many good moves in Moro Moro [Orabes Heneral], so they should not be forgotten. If possible, we should keep adding to them. One of the moves is the crouching stance that I showed you earlier.)

Mr. Boy Laurena, student, Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral - Interview (Luneta, Jan 2007)

Can you tell us a little bit about Filipino martial arts in general?

Tagalog: “*Well, for one, it’s our art. Nagmula sa atin ito. Kasama dyan ang Arnis, sikaran (foot fighting of the Philippines – parang Tae kwon do), Pencak Silat. From the Muslim areas yan. Parang empty hand, parang kung fu. Yung Arnis naman, ang Arnis kasi weaponry yan eh – lahat ng weapon kahit na itak, or knife, kasama parin sa Arnis yan.*”

English: (Well, for one, it is our art. It came from us. [Filipino martial arts] includes Arnis, sikaran (foot fighting of the Philippines – like Tae Kwon Do), Pencak Silat, which is from the Muslim areas. It is like empty hand [fighting], like kung fu. As for Arnis, weaponry is emphasized. All kinds of weapons are used, whether it be machetes, or knives... they are all part of Arnis.)



Mr. Boy Laurena



What is Eskrima?

Tagalog: “*Literally, Eskrima is fencing. Yan ang in-adapt ng mga Bisaya, mostly Cebuano. Sa mga Tagalog dito sa Luzon, Arnis. Sa mga Bisaya naman, Eskrima or garrote.*”

English: (Literally, Eskrima is fencing. It was adapted by the Visayans, mostly the Cebuanos. To the Tagalogs in Luzon, it is called Arnis. To the Visayans, it is called Eskrima or garrote)

What about Kali?

Tagalog: “Walang difference yung tatlong yun [Eskrima, Arnis, and Kali], bigla nalang lumitaw yung work na ‘Kali’ eh, di nga nila alam kung saan nanggaling yun...”

English: (There is no difference between those three [Eskrima, Arnis, and Kali], the world ‘Kali’ appeared out of nowhere, nobody even knows where it came from.)

What are the benefits for training for Eskrima?

Tagalog: “Unang una, weaponry yan eh. Kung may hawak ka na, lamang ka na. kung ang kalaban mo karate, empty hand lang siya, tapos ikaw may weapon. Doon pa lang lamang ka na.

Useful din siya... Tsaka kahit mataba ka, mapayat, maliit o malaki pwede ka. Kahit sino pwede mag Eskrima.

...Ang Arnis kasi magalaw, di katulad ng ibang martial arts tulad ng karate na naka-fix ang stance nila, for example. Mas fluid ang galaw ng Arnis dahil sa weaponry. Di pwedeng parang ibang martial arts na patigil-tigil, pag may weapon ka kailangan tuloy-tuloy yan. Yun ang edge niya sa ibang martial arts.”

English: (First and foremost, it deals with weaponry. You have an edge if you are holding a weapon. If your opponent is skilled in karate, he will only be using his fists against your weapon. In that alone you already have an edge.

It is useful too... And you can train in Eskrima even if you are fat, thin, short or tall. Anyone can train for Eskrima.

Arnis has to do with lots of movement. Unlike other martial arts, like karate for example, wherein their stance is fixed. Because of weaponry, the flow of Arnis is more fluid. When using a weapon, your flow must be continuous, unlike other martial arts that execute moves in a stop-and-go fashion. That is Eskrima’s edge over other martial arts.)

What is the Cinco Teros?

Tagalog: “Ang cinco teros, yun ang five cardinal strikes. Universal sa Arnis yan. Kung mapapansin mo, halos lahat ng style, yung numbering system nila, andun yung cinco teros.”

(The cinco teros is the five cardinal strikes. It is universal to Arnis. If you would notice, the cinco teros is included in the numbering system of almost all styles of Arnis.)

Does Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral have its own Cinco Teros or Rapelon?

Tagalog: “Meron siyang sariling numbering system. Yung Moro Moro [Orabes Heneral] ni Mang Andrew, yung one to five iba eh... Ang cinco teros, yun yung tawag... pero nagva-vary yung strikes kada style.”

English: (It has its own numbering system. The numbers one to five in Mang Andrew’s Moro Moro [Orabes Heneral] are different... cinco teros is what they are all called, but the strikes vary between styles.)



What makes Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral different from other Eskrima systems?

Tagalog: “Yung trademark talaga ng Moro Moro [Orabes Heneral], yung pinaka-unique niya, yung palo sa ulo na patalikod. Kasi yung ibang styles pag pumapalo, dito sa harapan eh. Ang Moro Moro [Orabes Heneral], pagka pumalo ka, hahawakan ka at tirahin ka eh, dito sa likod ng ulo. Kaya pagka ganoon ang palo mo, ibig sabihin, Moro Moro [Orabes Heneral] ka.”

English: (Moro Moro [Orabes Heneral]’s trademark, what is most unique about it, is the backwards strike to the head. With other styles, the strike is executed forwards. With Moro Moro [Orabes Heneral], when you strike, you will be held and struck in the back of your head. So if you strike that way, that means your style is that of Moro Moro [Orabes Heneral].)

What range is emphasized in Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral?

Tagalog: “Pwedeng close, medium, or long range, pwedeng mag-adapt yan. Pero mostly mas maganda siya sa close range.”

English: (It can be close, medium, or long range, it can adapt [to all three]. But mostly it is better if it is used at a close range.)



Any strategies unique to Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral?

Tagalog: “Ang Moro Moro [Orabes Heneral], kasi magalaw – yun ang pinaka- unique niya...iniikutan ang kalaban.”

English: (Moro Moro [Orabes Heneral] has to do with lots of movement – that is its most unique feature... one surrounds the opponent.)

Any strategies unique to Moro Moro Orabes Heneral?

Tagalog: “Ang Moro Moro [Orabes Heneral], defensive siya pero pwede rin offensive. Kasi sa style namin [Moro Moro Orabes Heneral], marami kaming mga enganyo. Sa training naman namin, sparring kaagad eh.

Maganda ang galaw ni Mang Andrew...kaya ko siya nagustuhan... kakaiba talaga ang galaw niya. Di katulad ng ibang Arnis na tatayo ka lang. Heto, iikutan ka talaga...very nimble siya eh.”

English: (Moro Moro [Orabes Heneral] is defensive, but can also be offensive. Our style has a lot of feinting techniques. As for our training, we start with sparring.

I liked Mang Andrew because he moves very well, there is something different about his moves, unlike in other Arnis styles wherein you are just standing up. Here, you are really surrounded [by your opponent]...he [Mang Andrew] is very nimble...)

How has learning Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral helped you in developing your own style?

Tagalog: “Nakadagdag siya... sinasabi ko sa mga estudyante ko na dapat di ka copycat ng master mo. Kasi pag dumating ka na sa punto na tapos ka na mag-train ay lalabas ang sarili mong character.”

English: (It has added some...I tell my students that you shouldn't be a copycat of your master. Because when you get to the point that you finish training, your real character will come out.)

As a long time practitioner of Filipino martial arts, what are your thoughts on its current state?

Tagalog: *"Sa atin, nakapagtataka na ang mga Pilipino mas ignorante pa sila sa mga martial arts natin eh. Sa abroad, alam nila yung Eskrima. Yung ang nakakalungkot dun eh. Yung iba, pag pumunta nga Amerika, tapos noong nalaman Pilipino ka sasabihin ng mga Amerikano, "turuan mo ako ng Arnis!" Eh dito, dito magtataka pa sila, "ano yun?!" kamo, pag sinabi mong Eskrima. Kaya nakakahiya minsan ang Pilipino eh..."*

Okay sana yung current state ng Eskrima ngayon kaso ang panget ay may mga lumalabas na mga master na di karapat-dapat. Ang dami, nakikita ko...nakanood lang nga tape ni Dan Inosanto. Galaw na galaw ni Dan Inosanto, tapos yun may sarili na daw silang style. Master na daw sila."

English: (It is surprising that we Filipinos are more ignorant to our martial arts [than others]. In countries abroad, they know what Eskrima is. That is what saddens me. Some have gone to America... and upon finding out they are Filipino, Americans tell them "teach me Arnis!" While in the Philippines, people will even wonder, "what's that!?" they say, when you mention Eskrima. That's why sometimes Filipinos can be shameful.

The current state of Eskrima is okay, except what is ugly about is that there are some masters that are coming out that are not deserving of the title. I have seen so many...that have just watched the tape of Dan Inosanto. Their moves are exactly like Dan Inosanto yet they say they have their own style. They call themselves "master" already.)

When did you start training for Eskrima?

Tagalog: *"17 years pa lang ako noon, nasa college lang ako. Yung unang labas na libro ni Father of Modern Arnis, si Remy Presas, yun ang teacher ko noon eh. Malapit nang 30 years ako eh..."*

English: (I was only 17 years old then, in college. The first book of the Father of Modern Arnis, Remy Presas... was my teacher. I have been training for almost 30 years...)

Can Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral be taught with an instructional video?

Tagalog: *"Nasa sa estudyante, di naman talaga sa instructor eh... nasa kayang i-grasp ng estudyante. Kahit na gaano kagaling yung instructor, kung hindi talaga kaya ng estudyante... although may maituturo naman ang instructor."*

Although kaya, matagal. Kailangan talaga ng practice."

English: (It really depends on the student, not necessarily the instructor... it depends on what the student can grasp. No matter how skilled the instructor is, if the student cannot get it...although the instructor may be able to impart his knowledge.

Although it is possible, it will take a long time. Practice is really needed.)

What advice can you give to those who want to learn Eskrima?

Tagalog: *"Maghanap ka ng qualified na master talaga... yung mahaba na yung experience, wag yung basta-basta lang."*

English: (To look for a qualified master...one who has a lot of experience, not just anyone.)

Principal Findings and Conclusions

Eskrima refers to a class of Filipino martial arts that emphasize stick and sword fighting. Some other commonly used terms include Kali, Arnis or Arnis de mano, and occasionally the abbreviation FMA (Filipino Martial Arts). It is an art borne out of necessity and shaped by political turmoil; a complete system of martial arts that includes weaponry, striking, grappling, wrestling, and ground fighting. Eskrima is based on a “defense through offense” philosophy, and the teaching of its basic skills is traditionally simplified. Although largely undocumented, several systems, subsections, weapon preferences, fighting techniques, fighting styles, fighting ranges, terminologies, and technical aspects can be found within Eskrima.

The most commonly used weapons in Eskrima are fire-hardened sticks or live blades. The triangle is of great importance to the art as it represents the footwork, stances, foundations of disarms, and theories of attack.

The generally accepted history of Eskrima has its roots in the 1500’s, however due to inadequate documentation, lack of authentic historical texts and the fact that much of its accounts are fixed in oral tradition, its actual origin is unclear. Eskrima thrived in secret throughout the Spanish, American, and Japanese occupations, and re-emerged in the public only in the twentieth century. Several associations have been established to promote Eskrima, but have had to make various technical alterations for the safety of its practitioners and the marketability of the art, thus creating a sport version more commonly referred to as Modern Arnis. Remy Presas, the “Father of Modern Arnis”, has the largest base of students than any other single Filipino master. It was this sport version that was then considered to be the national sport of the Philippines.

Today, there are over 200 known systems of Eskrima in the Philippines; however, the number of systems is fast-growing due to the art’s adaptive characteristics. The prohibition of dueling with live blades in the Philippines, the active promotion of Modern Arnis as a sport by various schools and associations, and its past history of secrecy propelled the art’s blade-fighting aspect into the shadows, while its safer, stick-wielding aspect is enjoying substantial exposure and popularity due to its inclusion in Hollywood films.

One system found within Eskrima is Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral, which has its own subsections, weapon preferences, fighting techniques, fighting styles, fighting ranges, terminologies, and technical aspects. Its iniquities and defining characteristics have made it, and its founder, Alejandro Abrian, the topic of numerous online discussions and articles. To this day, Abrian and his art are much sought after by martial arts practitioners from all over the world. As with most systems of Eskrima, there is hardly any material on the said system’s techniques. Furthermore, Abrian’s sixth stroke has limited his teaching abilities and his senior students have now developed and are teaching their own individual styles.

In conclusion, this study has made apparent that the art of Eskrima is very much a product of the Filipino cultural experience. It is a unique product of the members of a culture and the occurrences in its history. Its traditions are reflections of the Filipino persona, its arsenal a manifestation of Filipino ingenuity, and its recurrence an indication of the Filipino's resilience.

Thus, the significance of Eskrima to Filipino culture is vital. Its characteristic of adaptability offers us a chance to partake in its evolution, and its reemergence now provides us with the perfect window of opportunity to do so.

Hollywood's interest in the art of Eskrima indicates much more than a simple fascination for efficient combative techniques. The very things that define Hollywood today provide a fantastic platform for a modern take on preservation of culture and history: hi-tech computer animation, blue screens, slick graphics, telephoto lenses, film clips that can be sped up and slowed down, and an endless arrays of fonts, textures, and Pantone colors are only a few of Hollywood's handy tricks that are now available at Eskrima's disposal. Furthermore, the very fact that Hollywood is interested in Eskrima shows how much it wants to see martial action presented in these ways, and is an indirect gauge of what kind of market this type of art will be presented to.

Specific systems of Eskrima, such as Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral, would benefit greatly from Hollywood's interest, in that it gives us a chance to repackage and refurbish what may have once been considered as archaic. I therefore propose the introduction of a publication and a supplementary instructional video that make use of hi-tech graphics and edgy design, for a modern take on the preservation and documentation of Eskrima's techniques.

Definition of Terms

Abaniko: literally, a fan; a fanning-style strike delivered with a stick

Agimat: amulets which are believed to possess supernatural powers of protection

Anting-anting: a talisman or charm said to possess the supernatural power of protection for the bearer

Armas de Mano (Spanish): armor or weapons of (or manipulated by) the hands; early name used to describe the practice of Filipino weapon arts

Arnes (Spanish): colorful arm trappings worn on the costumes of the komedya stage actors

Arnis: the "modern" Filipino art of fencing or stick-fighting, developed into a sport after World War II

Arnisador: one who is proficient in the modern martial art of Arnis

Cinco teros (Spanish): the five strikes or angles of attack found within the *doce tero*

Corto (Spanish): a term used to describe the fighting techniques employed at a short range

Bahi: a hardwood indigenous to the Philippines which is used in the practice of Eskrima and Arnis

Barong (Visayan, Maguindanao): a heavy leaf-shaped sword popular among the Moros of Mindanao and Sulu

Baston (Spanish): a cane; used generically as a term referring to the fighting sticks of Eskrima and Arnis

Bolo (Spanish): general utility knife found with varying characteristics such as malapad (wide), matulis (sharp, pointed), used in *bolo* battalions during World War II

doble baston (Spanish): the art of using two canes, sticks, or clubs in self defense

Doce tero (Spanish): the twelve strikes or angles of attack found in the various systems of Eskrima and Arnis

Daga: knife wielding techniques, sometimes called *baraw*

Esgrima (Spanish): the Spanish term for the art of fencing

Eskrima (Tagalog): the “classical” Filipino art of stick fighting (e.g., fencing with sticks)

Some Major Systems of Eskrima

1. Babao Arnis
2. Balintawak - Founded by Anciong Bacon
3. Bahad Zu’Bu Kali Ilustrisimo - Founded/Developed by Epifanio “Yuli” Romo
4. Cabales Serrada Eskrima - Founded by Angel Cabales
5. Davis/Cabales System - Founded by Anthony Davis after training and collaborating with Angel Cabales
6. Dekiti Tirsia Siradas - Founded by Jerson Tortal
7. Doce Pares Escrima - Founded by the Cañete family, headed by Grandmaster Cacoy Cañete
8. Giron Arnis Escrima - Leo Giron’s Bahala Na System
9. Inayan Eskrima - Developed by Suro Mike Inay
10. Inosanto Kali - Developed by Dan Inosanto from various other styles
11. Kalis Ilustrisimo - Founded by Antonio Ilustrisimo, important as the ancestor of many current Eskrima systems
12. Lameco Eskrima - Founded by Edgar Sulite
13. Lapunti Arnis De Abanico - Founded by Filemon Caburnay in 1972
14. Latigo y Daga - Whip and Dagger fighting system founded by Tom Meadows
15. LSAI - the name means Lighting Scientific Arnis International, founded by Benjamin Lema
16. LESKAS - the Lema Scientific Kali-Arnis System, formally established in 1996
17. Modern Arnis - founded by Remy Presas. His brother Ernesto Presas founded the related art of Kombatan.
18. Patayin Estilo - Founded by Blaise Loong
19. Pekiti Tirsia - Founded by Leo T. Gaje from the family system of the Tortal family
20. Sayoc Kali - mainly taught by the Sayoc family
21. San Miguel Eskrima - Created by Filemon “Momoy” Cañete
22. Senkotiros - Founded by Max Pallen, Sr.
23. Sudlud Eskrima - Founded by Ray Terry
24. Villabrille System - Founded by Ben Largusa on the teachings of Floro Villabrille

Eskrimador: one who is proficient in the self-defense techniques of Eskrima

Espada y Daga (Spanish): the style of Eskrima or Arnis fighting which employs the use of the sword and the dagger

Enganyo: a feinting technique or faking maneuver

FMA: Filipino Martial Arts; the collective term used for all Filipino martial arts

Guro (Spanish): a generic term for an instructor, sometimes referring to a master

Heneral: high strike

Hukbalahap (Tagalog): short for Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon, or the People's Army Against Japan

Jihad (Arabic): Islamic holy war waged against Christians. Those who die in the struggle are pronounced shahid (martyrs) and are assured a place in sulga (heaven).

Juramentado (Spanish): the term ascribed to the Islamic religious right of the Moros of Sulu and Mindanao running and decapitating non-Muslims in their path

Kalis: a serpentine sword used among the Moros of Mindanao and Sulu; also spelled *keris* and *kris*

Kamagong: a hard wood similar to ebony found in the Philippines and used as combat sticks

Komedya: from the Spanish, comedia. A popular tagalog drama also called Moro-Moro because of the preponderance of the Muslim vs. Catholic theme. Used as propaganda by the Spanish friars to promote Catholicism and foster a hatred of Islam

Largo mano (Spanish): long hand; used to describe the long range styles and techniques found within Filipino martial arts

Lastiko: elastic, term used to the style of weaving the body back and forth while executing techniques in Arnis

Mandirigma: fighting man or an experienced combatant; a warrior

Medio (Spanish): medium; a term used to describe the fighting techniques employed at a medium range

Moro (Spanish): a term ascribed to Muslim Filipinos by the Spanish who thought they looked similar to the Moors of Africa

Moro Moro (Spanish): a name for a specific type of komedya stage play which features the triumph of Christianity of the rebellious Muslim warriors of the Philippines

Orabes: low strike

Pangamut (Visayan): the martial art said to have been developed by Rajah Lapulapu in the sixteenth-century

Pencak silat (Indonesian): the Indonesian art of attack and defense

Rapelon: dance-like fighting form created by Andrew Abrian for Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral; used as a multi-directional drill or shadowboxing against multiple opponents

Riterada (Spanish): to retreat; a retreating footwork or defensive maneuver used in various Filipino martial arts

Sandata: any class of weapon, arms, or ammunition; term used to classify the weapons used in various Filipino martial arts

Sangga: a term used to classify various blocking techniques

Sayaw: a dance. The term also classifies both weapon and empty hand forms in various Filipino martial arts

Sinawali: to weave; the style of double stick fighting from the Macabebe of Pampanga which utilizes interweaving motions of the sticks

Solo baston (Spanish): use of a single weapon such as a cane, stick or club for self defense

Sultan (Arabic): an individual who represents the highest religious and political authority within the Islamic region

Suntok: a punch; the term used to classify the system of Filipino boxing or grouping of various punching techniques

Tadyakan: to stomp; term used to describe various stomping; kicking; and sweeping techniques

Yantok at Daga: the style of Eskrima or Arnis fighting employing the use of the stick and dagger

Bibliography

Related Literature:

Central to this study is the definition and classification of the art of Eskrima and its systems. Wikipedia.com, and the book *Filipino Martial Culture* (1996) by Mark V. Wiley provided both, as well as the art's history, weapons, subsections, systems, and classifications. An up to date list of Eskrima in Hollywood was also provided by *Wikipedia.com*. Information on the art's esoteric traditions was also found in the aforementioned *Filipino Martial Culture*, and in the book *Filipino Martial Arts* (1982) by Nid Anima. The articles *On Purism and Development* and *Toward Meaning and Understanding*, both by Mark V. Wiley, made the clear distinction between the arts somewhat interchangeable terms. Black Eagle Eskrima's website further defined Eskrima and provided some information on who uses Eskrima. The articles *Arnis: A Question of Origins* by Felipe "Bot" Jocano and *Questioning the Origins of Eskrima* by Ned Nepangue brought new theories on Eskrima's cloudy history to the table, while the article *Filipino Martial Traditions* by Pedro Reyes gave us insight into the customs practiced within the art. The book *Masters of Arnis, Kali and Eskrima* (1993) by Edgar Sulite supplemented some information on the art's technical aspects, and an example of the Twelve Strikes as used in a certain system.

Mark V. Wiley, who has trained under Alejandro Abrian himself, provided the researcher with plenty of information on Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral. His article *A History of Arnis in Manila and Surrounding Areas* talks of Abrian and his art being integral to Eskrima's history in Manila. He also makes note of the lack of documentation on the art and its systems. Another one of his books, *Filipino Fighting Arts: Theory and Practice* (2000), offered a precise analysis of the Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral system. The articles *Not for Zorro: Thoughts on Knife Fighting* and *Moro-Moro Orabes Heneral: An Interview with Arnis Master Andrew Abrian* both by Edwin Dy provided the researcher with further insight into Master Abrian and his art, as well as pictures on knife defense which were used as guides for an entire section of the researcher's own publication. Text from the articles was also used in the final creative project.

Finally, the article on Benicio del Toro and *The Hunted* was supplemented by the Sayoc Kali website.

Methods of Gathering Data:

Initial studies were done on the internet and in libraries. Additional reading materials were acquired through the kindness of Alex and Cora from Squadron Martial Arts Shoppe and Mark and Ralph Nepomuceno, whom I communicated with on a regular basis.

Aside from the continuing correspondence with Mr. Nepomuceno, interviews were conducted with former students of Mr. Abrian. Interviews with Mr. Henry Espero, Mr. Loreto “Boy” Laurena, and Mr. Amie Balgoa were all conducted at Luneta, Manila on separate occasions. Demonstrations of skill and Rapelons were videotaped and photos were taken. Finally, an interview with Mr. Abrian himself was conducted in Quezon City, on the first week of February. All interviews were filmed with video cameras.

The instructional video was filmed with two cameras. Photos of additional techniques not included in the instructional video were taken thereafter.

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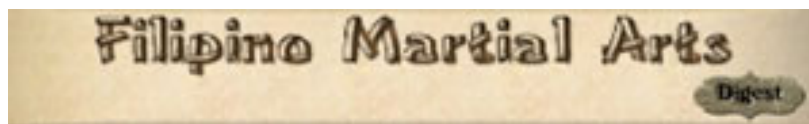
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