

Filipino Martial Arts

Vasquez Modified Tapado

Digest

Special Edition
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Headmaster Mike Vasquez

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Modified Tapado Propagator in Texas, U.S.A.

Senior Master Samuel “Bambit” Dulay

Tapado = The Striking Distance

The Alliance of Modified Tapado and IMAFP - Its Roots

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From the Publishers Desk

Kumusta

Tapado, an unusual art that once understood and even tried will be appreciated. It is an art that even in practice is very vigorous and taxing in physical strength if done properly.

What the originator of Tapado, Grandmaster Romeo Mamar, did was to break from the past by lengthening his weapon by one foot and one half feet (45 to 47 inches) more than the usual. Shortly before his death, Grandmaster Mamar asked Grandmaster Mike Vasquez, his most creative student in Tapado, to keep alive his legacy to the Filipino martial arts. Grandmaster Vasquez has always thought of Tapado as a complement to Arnis and not a replacement. If it needs saying, nothing can replace Arnis. He, however, believes that Tapado should be considered as the long stick art of Arnis.

In this Special Edition is a collection of information on Tapado, in which the reader will most definitely be able to understand the concepts of Tapado. Keep an open mind. Understand it, if given the chance try it and you will see that it opens a new world to any practitioner.

While in the Philippines the FMA Digest was able to meet with Advanced Instructor Antonio Aguirre and a couple other Tapado practitioners. Even had the opportunity to have a short conversation on the phone with Grandmaster Mike Vasquez.

One thing is apparent about a Tapado practitioner, they are proud of their art, not boastful but to the point and carry a self-assuredness of the art.

Maraming Salamat Po



FMA Digest Publisher with Attorney Madell Vergara, Advanced Instructor Antonio Aguirre, Senior Master Samuel “Bambit” Dulay (IMAFP), and Jeremy Chavez.

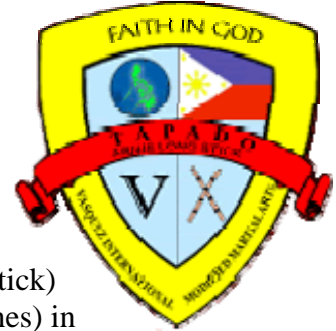
The Ways of Modified Tapado

By: Advanced Instructor Antonio Ivan S. Aguirre

Modified Tapado Background and its Martial Arts Legacy



Grandmaster Mike Vasquez
Founder
Modified Tapado



For many centuries, to begin with, Filipinos have been enamored by the light cane (referred often as a stick) of two and one half feet (26 to 30 inches) in length. They loved and still do the length of Arnis because it approximated the length of their bolos or machetes, which were actually their traditional weapon long before the colonial years. An Arnis stick was merely a training tool in lieu of the real thing, the length of which, therefore, became sacrosanct.

What the originator of Tapado, Grandmaster Romeo Mamar, did was to break from the past by lengthening his weapon by one foot and one half feet (45 to 47 inches) more than the usual. He named his different style, Tapado, a term which embodies the first principle of his combat philosophy: “Finish the fight in your own favor in the first move.”

The additional inches were looked down among Grandmaster Mamar’s peers at the time as a violation of tradition. Among Filipinos, conservatism is strong, especially in religion, in politics, in social relationships, and of course, even in the martial arts.

It is true that there is nothing new under the sun. But after a long journey in the old, beaten paths of Arnis-fighting styles, one can start, if he is creative enough, something new. In fact styles over the centuries are nothing more than the products of the processes of addition, subtraction, and modifications.

Shortly before his death, Grandmaster Mamar asked Grandmaster Mike Vasquez, his most creative student in Tapado, to keep alive his legacy to the Filipino martial arts. Grandmaster Mike Vasquez, an innovator of Tapado, an Arnis man in his own right, and a karate champion in his contest days, took the challenge to spread the art with his own modifications. Grandmaster Mamar recognized the innovations of Grandmaster Vasquez and praised him for them.

Grandmaster Vasquez has always thought of Tapado as a complement to Arnis and not a replacement. If it needs saying, nothing can replace Arnis. He, however, believes that Tapado should be considered as the long stick art of Arnis.

At the onset, Grandmaster Vasquez considered Tapado as “the long stick style” of Arnis. Some of the techniques that Tapado utilizes came from some styles of Arnis. Only this time, Tapado suits various situations, i.e., fighting other weapons of shorter length compared to itself, weapon of equal length to itself, or even those that are longer.

But what is Tapado? The term came from the Hiligaynon, the dialect of the Ilongo, the native Filipinos who originally occupied and still do the island of Panay and Negros (the Occidental side). The Ilonggos should not be confused with the Ilongots,

who were the head hunters somewhere in Central Luzon, a couple or so centuries ago. Since the first Malays (the first cane stick or cane fencers) settled the island of Panay.

There are many styles wielding the cane in existence today, but it would be safe to say that no significant changes if any was ever made in the length of the weapon. It stuck to 24 inches or there about.

In China, and Japan, however, the length of their various traditional bludgeoning and thrusting weapons are varied. The Japanese for instance, on one hand, have the kendo cane, which measures 40 to 45 inches more or less when measured from end to end. The Bo, on the other hand, is even longer, 50 to 60 inches more or less.

The first length variation in the world of Arnis occurred sometime in the 60's, when a Filipino Arnis "escrimador," Romeo Mamar, in the island of Negros, took a bold step by increasing the length of his cane by another 15 to 17 inches more or less. He called his fighting art Tapado. The other established escrimadores received it with indifference, if not with contempt, which is a natural reaction from those who are stickler to tradition.

And since he was left out in the cold, as it were, he developed his own group and improved his techniques against weapons equal in length. In the fullness of time, some of his advanced students who saw something formidable in Tapado, decided to keep the art to themselves, a common characteristic of many martial artists' mental baggage from the past. We can hardly blame them for being secretive. After all secrecy is one of the tenets towards victory in combat. The Orientals are masters in it, and Filipinos are Orientals, though in the United States of America, the nomenclature for them is Pacific Islanders. Going back to the term Tapado, it means "You're finished," "over," or "through." It had to be, for the overriding purpose of Tapado is to win in the encounter by finishing the fight instantly.

To achieve its end instant victory the weapon must be capable of maximum power in every blow. There are feinting moves in Tapado, but there is no fainting strike. Every strike when unleashed is powerfully sincere. If you escape the downward strike, you have the ricocheting force to contend with.

Compared with Arnis, as earlier mentioned, Tapado is longer, therefore heavier, thus capable of stronger wallop. In Arnis, multiple blows may be necessary to down an opponent. In Tapado, the long-stick of Arnis, can dispose an opponent in one blow.

Because of its longer length, it provides longer extension to the arms, thus an advantage in reaching the target, while, at the same time, minimizing the danger of retaliation.

But the true usefulness of Tapado as a long stick (cane) weapon of Arnis" is not only in fighting short sticks (canes), rather it is most useful in confronting weapons similar or longer to its length. The longer your stick, you have a good fighting chance of winning than using a short stick. Therein lays truly its true value to the Filipino Martial Arts.

It is our aim, then, that this almost half-century old Filipino method of Arnis long stick art of fighting will be welcomed, integrated and looked upon by the martial arts world as something unique in concept, in science, in art, and in utility.



Grandmaster Mike Vasquez (right) executing a Kambiada overpowering technique with Tony Aguirre, Advanced Instructor (left)

The Weapon

A Tapado cane is about 45-47 inches in length. The weight of the cane is about one half a kilo, heavier compared to the usual rattan arnis stick, which is usually about one-fourth kilo in weight. The length, of course, is obviously longer about twice.

The Tapado cane, where the holding grips are placed, is about one inch to one and one-eighth inches in diameter, enough to have a firm and comfortable grip.

The Objective

In real combat, the aims of a Tapado fighter are two; namely, to smash the head of his enemy or to break his collar bone, or crush the hands of the enemy who has a non-projectile weapon of his own.

The Stance



Senior Instructor Jimmy Efenio holding the weapon in a natural stance.



Master Ric Barraca executing bunal dos in a modified forward stance.

The feet are placed for balance and speed, i.e., a Tapado fighter should stand in a manner that both feet have a one-and-one-half shoulder width between them. The only difference is that the right foot is always forward or ahead of the left.

Holding the Weapon

At the holding end or handle, one inch of the Tapado cane must protrude from the grip of the left hand. Note that the left hand is always ahead of the right when chambered. The Tapado weapon is slung beside the shoulder, not on. Between the grips, a one-to-two-inch space must be provided for your wrists to move freely.

As the Tapado weapon is slung almost loosely beside the shoulder, the gripping hands holding it must be quite relaxed but firm. At the ready position, don't ever grip the weapon tightly. If you do, you will interfere with its proper delivery. One advice to swordsmen that is applicable to holding of any weapon is that: "Your weapon is like a

bird. If you hold it too tight, you'll choke it to death; if you hold it too loose, it will fly away."

Number of Basic Strikes

Uno and *dos* (one and two) are the basic strikes in Tapado. The *bunal uno* originates from the right shoulder; the *dos*, from the left.

Direction of Strikes

The direction of the strike or the path of the weapon is a curve line from the shoulder to the top of the head and down to the ground in front of the Tapado man. As soon as the end of the weapon hits the ground, it bounces or allowed to bounce upward; if possible, tracing the path it took when it was going down. The bouncing effect is naturally the outcome of that proverbial meeting of an irresistible force and an immovable object. The irresistible force is the downward strike, the power of which culminates at the time the end of the cane hits the ground. The immovable object, the ground, will reflect the power behind the cane to force it to bounce back. (The *bunal dos*, however, the cane is not expected to bounce back to the side of the shoulder, rather it should be swept back to the left side and chambered back to where it came from.).

The bounce, however, will give power and force to the upward direction of the Tapado cane so it is propelled toward the point where it came from—the side of the shoulder. If the cane was unleashed from the *bunal uno* stance, it will return to that stance. A Tapado fighter, however, can chamber in either shoulder easily and adeptly, if he chooses to.

As the cane bounces upward, it will again create havoc to whatever object blocking its upward path. It is important to note that the downward and upward movements of the weapon are all the time under the control of the wielder of it. Furthermore, it must be borne in mind that the weapon does not linger on the ground or in front of its wielder. It must always come back in chamber.

Sparring



Master Henried Lamayo (right) and Advance Instructor Tony Aguirre (left) during a sparring session



Master Bobot Gayoles during sparring with Master Lamayo.



Master Gayoles executing a secondary overpowering technique against Master Lamayo.



Master Ric Barraca executing pigar technique against Advanced Instructor Tony Aguirre.



Master Barraca during sparring with Senior Instructor Jimmy Efenio.

A martial art that does not provide sparring opportunities to its practitioners is not worth to call itself a martial art. Neither can it pretend to be an art, for to be such; it must provide for its practitioners the opportunity to use its techniques creatively in action. It may be mock action, but at least they will experience its effectiveness and even its ineffectiveness.

As soon as they see its effect, the students can express their own creativeness wherein they can excel within the rules of that martial art.

Essentially, Tapado is a martial art of sheer power - power in its two basic strikes: *bunal uno* and *bunal dos*. It must be, if it has to live up to its name “to finish forthwith.”

Since it would be impractical and fatal to spar realistically in Tapado, like splitting the head of an opponent, for example, as I said previously, Tapado sparring practice is appropriately limited to a display of striking power. Sparring practice to a Tapado man is referred as “over-powering” practice.

What do we strike? What or who is the target? Tapado men strike each other's cane. The cane of your sparring partner is your target.

What is to be achieved in this kind of sparring routine? A victory. This is an achievement because, at the point of impact a point, which we termed *crucial point*—your cane got on top of your opponent's. As soon as you have done that, you have stolen his thunder, so to speak. The power behind your sparring partner's weapon is dissipated, and your weapon will drive his to the ground. In a way, it's like arm wrestling. As soon as one wrestler's arm loses the centerline, most likely he will lose the match. Similarly, in Tapado sparring, as soon as you are overpowered at the crucial point, you lose.

In a nutshell, Tapado sparring is based on sheer power—power behind the strike and power in the forearms and the shoulders, most of all in the gripping power of your hands. The slight, forward bend at the waist, of course, increases power to the strike as well.

Formal Sparring Ceremony

Both sparring partners face each other at a distance of about five feet, with canes on ready positions. It is customary that the more experienced practitioner should pose in *bunal uno* stance, while the less experienced sparring partner should be in *bunal dos*.

Gently, both partners touch canes at critical point, then lower their weapons in line with their belt line. From this position, each measures a distance of five inches from his grip to the tip of opponent's cane. This, of course, is a safety measure that will somehow protect the hands from being hit while in the heat of "overpowering" strikes.

It is also customary for both partners that the first two initial strikes should be powered at about twenty to thirty percent of their total capabilities. Thereafter, the "hostilities" are initiated, which means that the most powerful blows are called upon to get to the top of each other's cane and drive sparring partner's weapon to the ground.

After three or five cane clashes, the stronger Tapado man will be revealed. So, too, will the weaker one.

To summarize: The aim in Tapado sparring is to have your cane on top of your opponent's as both of your weapons clash at the crucial point.

What is a crucial point? A crucial point is a portion of an imaginary straight line that begins from the center of your chest and ends up at the center of your sparring partner's.. Ordinarily when you are sparring, you hit your opponent's cane along that portion of the imaginary centerline. The point in that line where your cane and his hit each other is what I termed crucial point.

With all the powerful strikes in each session, and considering the length of the Tapado canes, it would be proper to say that Tapado is an outdoor martial art.

Material for Tapado Canes

With all the power behind each strike, with all the clashing of canes that characterizes a sparring session, no cane material can withstand the stress that it is subjected to.

Rattan has been tried, but it failed the test. A few strikes made it look like a coconut midrib broom. Even Kamagong and bahi are found wanting. These native materials are excellent for arnis, but short-lived when they are used in Tapado.

Fortunately, after long experiments and experience, the founder of Tapado, finally settled for coffee, tula-tula and *kalamunding* branches as these three plants meet the needs of Tapado. The reason for this choice rests on the resiliency of these materials. After too much stress from the sparring sessions, they can shatter lengthwise, but not crosswise. In Tapado sparring a crosswise break on the cane can cause injuries, for it can fly off and hit a sparring partner's face.

**Headmaster Mike Vasquez
Vasquez Modified Tapado**

Demonstrates Down and Up Hitting of Basic Techniques



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8

Demonstrates Tursido Hitting Technique Application



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8

About the Author:

Antonio Ivan S. Aguirre is an: Advanced Instructor, Modified Tapado and Nidan (2nd Dan) Blackbelt, Vasquez Modified Karate. He is the Head - Special Audit of Metrobank, No. 1 bank in the Philippines. He is a Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE), CPA and MBA.

Vasquez Modified Tapado

By: Rodolfo G. Vivero

Tapado is a Filipino martial art, At first glance; it does not deserve the term art as part of its definition. Seeing two Tapado men beating at each other's Tapado stick instead of each other's head or body in what they call sparring session, can make one hastily conclude that the object of the activity is to find out who between the two has the stronger striking power or who has the stronger cane.

In its formation, those who practiced Tapado wanted to keep the art to themselves, a common characteristic among some martial artists who do not want to divulge their newly found technique of beating an opponent. Arnis masters, on the other hand, especially those who had accepted the challenge to "crossed swords" with Tapado men, ended up downplaying Tapado as impertinent, a fighting method without grace, without a sense of fair play.

But what is Tapado? Who started it? What is a Tapado weapon? What are its basic fighting techniques?

Definition

The term Tapado has a few shades of meaning signifying finality or ending. It can mean, "It's all over." or "dead," or "finished." However, first, Tapado is a Filipino martial art. Tapado is a Filipino Martial Art because it was invented by a Filipino who lived, died and got buried in the Philippines, from which Arnis, invariably called baston or yaming, escrima etc, came from. Tapado is martial because it has to do with fighting. As to its being an art, you have to try it out for yourself to know if it can make the grade. As of now, let's temporarily consider it as such, for Tapado was born out of a martial art - Arnis. Tapado actually is the "child of Arnis." Or perhaps it can be said that Tapado is merely a modification of Arnis.

Who thought of it?

Tapado was started by the late Grandmaster Romeo ("Nono") Mamar, a rice farmer who tilled his own land in a barrio in the outskirts of Bacolod City. As a young man, Nono learned to wield the Arnis stick from masters of the art, an activity usual to men in rural areas. In barrios at the time when television was not yet in vogue, when "Arnis impromptu contests" were a rite of passage, as well as a form of entertainment, Mamar was in constant touch with stick-fencing activities, as a member of an audience and on several instances, as one of the contestants.

An Arnis "impromptu" contest, by the way, is a contest between two Arnis fighters who had agreed to meet at a certain place, at a certain time, with the sole purpose of proving who is the better Arnis man, as well as who has the better fighting style. On-lookers are invited. The fighters showed no hostility among them, leaving only pride or vanity as motivation, thus the necessity of an audience. The actual fighting does not last

long, for as soon as one or both gets hit and blooded, the fight is stopped by their seconds, otherwise one of the contestants can get seriously injured or even killed. Impromptu contests existed (they still do) long before formal tournaments, with all their rules, armor, and all were heard of.

Throughout the years, like many of *escrimadores* (Arnis fencers) in his time, where no governing body of any kind to formulate rules, as there is today, Mamar had a good share of injuries bloody head, fat lips, lacerated or broken fingers, warts the whole works common to Arnis men who have styles to demonstrate and egos to inflate. Whenever he got worsted, he would switch style.

The weapon

One day, frustration got the better of him. He decided to increase by almost double the length of his cane to that of Arnis stick. When he was standing straight, one end of his Tapado cane reached his armpit straight from the ground. Because of the added length, it is natural to increase its diameter, thus increasing its weight in the process. The length of a cane is not unique. Chinese and Japanese martial arts have long and even longer weapons like the bo and halberd. Moses, of “The Ten Commandments” fame, used his long cane as a weapon, as well as for other purposes.

The Technique

Both hands should grip the weapon, much as if a Samurai warrior holds his sword. The attack and defense moves are the embodiment of simplicity. Facing the opponent, with the Tapado cane on the side of your shoulder, strike downward, then retrieve the weapon upward along the same path toward the shoulder. Needless to say, both actions - downward-upward - should be performed with power and speed, with the end in view of ripping through anything that stands in the path of the Tapado cane.



Sensei Mike Vasquez (right) executing an Advanced Modified Tapado striking technique with Tony Aguirre, Junior Instructor (left).



Instructors Henried Lamayo (right) and Tony Aguirre (left) executing Modified Tapado striking techniques.

This up and down striking move is akin to Arnis. Sometime in 1960, the late Grandmaster Remy Presas showed me that one way to disarm a man doing a rampillon is to use the up and down strike. Moreover, some years ago, I saw a young contestant got disqualified in a contest because the up-and-down strike which seemed to be all he knew. They judged him as impertinent and artless.

Believing in the efficacy of his system, Mamar recruited students to learn and spar with him. In the past, he waded through Arnis fighters with their usual, traditional sticks. But he encountered difficulties problems from his students who were also using Tapado canes. Mamar's solutions to the problems mark the birth of art in Tapado. But it cannot be denied that his solutions his techniques were taken from Arnis, except for various techniques he created germane to Tapado as a long-stick (cane), two hand-held weapon.

A few years ago, an Arnis instructor who is better known as a karate instructor and the Heavyweight National Professional Karate Champion, Mike Vasquez*, was handed a Tapado cane by one of his karate students who was an experienced Tapado man, and he was



asked to try his hand in a Tapado sparring routine. Mike obliged, believing that, from what he saw, this Tapado thing is nothing more than a contest of striking power.

Despite the fact that Mike dwarfed the Tapado man in height, weight, and, no doubt in power, he was astonished to find his Tapado cane pinned down after every clash. Mike sensed right away that there must be a catch somewhere, that, to paraphrase Shakespeare, there is method in this madness. In no time at all, he was studying Tapado under Mamar himself. Both instructors became good friends. Mamar knew of Mike's own technical contributions to the fighting art he started. The last time I saw Mamar was when he formally designated Mike Vasquez to spread the art of Tapado. This led Mike Vasquez to incorporate several techniques leading to the modification of Tapado, now known as the "Vasquez Modified Tapado".

Today, Mike Vasquez is on the forefront in the dissemination of the art. Many Arnis masters and grandmasters have tried their hands in this "Arnis Long Stick Art of Fighting."



Rodolfo G. Vivero is a:

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Modified Tapado Follow-Up Strikes

By: Ferdinand Emmanuel “Bobot” Gayoles



Master Ferdinand Emmanuel “Bobot”
Gayoles executing a “Bunal Dos Strike”

The year 2006 saw the exposure of Modified Tapado as one of the styles of Arnis with great promise. Proponents of the style were invited to showcase Modified Tapado in various seminars and FMA festivals. It was during these occasions where the utility of the long stick was witnessed and appreciated by a wider audience.

During the demonstrations, many arnisadors were captivated and awed by the immense power generated by the long stick. People really interested had the chance to feel the vibration generated by the impact of the

Modified Tapado strikes. The force of these strikes definitely conjured in the minds of the receiver images of fearful injuries if control was withheld.

In the majority of Modified Tapado demonstrations, two practitioners face each other, make a salutation, adjust their distance and deliver the customary No. 1 and No. 2 strikes. Integrated with these strikes are techniques wherein the supposed loser is almost simultaneously hit by the victor's stick immediately after the two opposing sticks make contact.

This contact can only have two outcomes. First, the victor's stick slides along the length of the loser's stick and continues to hit the arms, head, body, or even the legs of the loser. Second, there is the complete displacement of the loser's stick after which the strike continues along a path hitting the loser in any part of his body chosen by the victor. Either outcome will have the same results.

To those unfamiliar with the art, this is where the match ends. However, to aficionados, this is just a foretaste of strikes to follow. Hitting the opponent's stick and displacing it as well as striking any part of his anatomy is just the first step in dealing the decisive blow that will terminate a real life-threatening situation. It is important to note though that in the execution of the initial and succeeding strikes, force is never compromised.

Each strike must be an integration of speed, power, will, and intent. Any strike containing these elements will be devastating and difficult to block or redirect. A hit on any part of the body can inflict incapacitating pain or even prove fatal.

Once the obstacles for the follow-up strikes have been cleared, succeeding strikes must be immediately executed. There must be no let-off until complete victory is attained. The follow-up strikes are done not only to incapacitate the opponent but also to render the opponent incapable of intelligently and rationally defending himself.

Modified Tapado Follow-up Strikes

The follow-up strikes are just repetitions of the No. 1 and No. 2 strikes done in rapid succession. Combinations of the two strikes could also be executed. The number of successive strikes will be entirely dependent on the striker's capability.

In principle, follow-up strikes are easy to do but in practice they could be very exhausting. There is a great demand for energy on the part of the striker as he must return the stick in the ready or chamber position after each strike. Under no circumstance must the strike be allowed to end with the stick in the ground. A return to the chamber position is essential to prepare the striker for additional strikes should the need arise.

An essential element for rapid striking is to make a very strong downward strike. Upon contact to the ground the stick will bounce. This bounce must be used to help the striker chamber the stick back to the ready position. It is important for the striker to feel this bounce and go with its force so that chambering the stick for the next strike would seem effortless. Shouting or yelling in conjunction with the strike also increases the force of the impact.

Follow-up strikes are also enhanced by moving forward and backward. When moving forward, the lead leg moves first followed by the rear leg. To move back, the execution is reversed.

Multi-directional exercises can also be done. Adopting a traditional walking stance with the right leg forward and the stick chambered for a No. 1 strike. The striker puts his rear leg behind his front leg, turns counterclockwise on the balls of his rear foot will allow him to make a 180° strike. To make a strike to the left, the left foot steps to the left and the right foot pivots in the same direction resulting in a walking stance, No. 1 strike chambered, then the strike is executed. To make a strike to the right, the left foot steps to the left and the whole body with both legs, pivots to the right. The same principle is applied to the No. 2 strike.

These movements must be slowly executed until such time when the execution of the combination moves becomes effortless and second to nature. Once attained a faster pace with more combination strikes may be adapted.

Ferdinand Emmanuel “Bobot” Y. Gayoles is:

Modified Tapado Master

3rd Dan Blackbelt, WTF Taekwondo

Master of Yasay Sable and Oido Stick Fighting

Master of Arts in Education

A multi-awarded sugarcane planter and a TV Host on Agriculture

Simplicity

Modified Tapado Principles/General Profile/Basic Striking Techniques

By: Joe Valencia Tan

It's interesting to note that Modified Tapado has only two very important basic strikes to master for a life-time compared to conventional arnis with its 12 basics striking techniques and 7 or 5 striking points for some schools. The practitioner of this unique art has to deal with 2 major strikes and accessory blows. The whole principle behind the art is “SIMPLICITY” no fancy movements, no dancing, no complicated techniques, but just delivering overpowering strikes and hits done simultaneously. How it is delivered is very amazing once the various techniques were applied when executing downward and upward striking movements.

In this writing, you will not see any pictures on how we do it, since it is subtle and hard to decipher but I will try my best to illustrate the very basic principles of ordinary strikes as the founder envisioned it. (The Founder / History / Grandmaster of Modified Tapado can be found in separate articles). Before I discuss further the points of ordinary strikes let me give you some short details of events with regard to Tapado in general.

My main purpose of writing this article is not only to write about the principles of ordinary strikes but to point out why various martial artists (specializing in stick fighting) join this Original or Modified Tapado Group. The Founder Nono Mamar is already a well known and respected stick fighter during his time specializing in Ohido, Sinamak and Lagas style of Arnis. When he developed the Tapado movements and strikes, it attracted various martial artists already well known and well made on their own right. Yet, these various Masters and Grandmasters still wants to learn and be a part of it.

The catch is they must have seen something effective and different that they want it to be a part of their stick fighting arsenals. The main barometer on how effective this system is the endorsement of these very qualified and well respected grandmasters and martial artists who are now part of the system. Example of these people is Grandmaster Mike Vasquez himself. Before Tapado was introduced to him, Sensei Mike, as he is well known by that name, is already an accomplished martial artist.

He owns a martial art school, a national heavyweight champion in Karate, a well verse stick fighter, and has trained and produced numerous Karate Champions. He is also a Physical Education major. Sensei Vasquez (Grandmaster Mike now) being in the martial arts for a long time, isn't a person that you could convince easily with regards to certain system or applications. Also Grandmaster Dominador Ferrer, as I know too is already a master of arnis has seen the effectiveness and functionality of this art and became a Modified Tapado practitioner.



Sensei Mike Vasquez
delivering modified Karate Penetrating Punch.

Back to basic, as commonly used in any field is the ultimate point when one reaches the highest peak. Just like after reaching the peak of the mountain, one has still to go back to where he started from. So in martial arts , even after undergoing a lot of striking and sometimes complicated disarming drills and techniques, one still goes back to the simplest techniques during actual fight. It's more of the striking abilities / techniques that counts...whoever can strike effectively or overpower the offensive strike or attack , has the edge. And this is why Tapado was designed by the Founder.

Now as to its principle, the main purpose of the basic strike is to overpower the offensive attack or strikes that are coming in and while overpowering them one simultaneously hitting the targeted parts of the opponent's body. This has to be done in one downward and upward strike in one count. How a Tapadoist overcomes an incoming powerful strike is a wonder but thru application of unseen hand and body movements, incoming strikes can be put under control. It's not how strong or big you are but it's how you apply the techniques in various ways.

The techniques actually are so simple, that you will make fun of yourself once it is taught and showed the applications to you. You start asking questions such as... How did I miss this movement when I have been studying martial arts for a long time? Well the answer is, because it is too simple we tend to overlook it or have taken it for granted.

To give you a direct hint, Tapado techniques, have something to do with continuous movements (continuity), interceptions, resistance, percentage calculations, evasions, proper angling and the various hand and body movements that you will learn as you go higher in your experience and learning. So it is the collective summary of all these terms mentioned above which comprised the ultimate power of Tapado in general.



Masters Joe Tan and Ric Barraca



Master Joe Tan and Grandmaster Mike Vasquez, executing numero dos strike.

In Tapado, there is no empty hand disarming, since the counter strikes itself, if properly executed, will already disarm or neutralize the attacker. Yes, there are sparring sessions but in a controlled and safe manner since long sticks are more powerful when handled with both hands. In exhibitions and demonstrations, Tapado systems are actually not attractive to the audience since you don't see stick flying, no empty hand disarming, no fancy movements, no katas but only the

sound of colliding sticks and hitting techniques which are almost invisible to the viewers.

Learning Tapado in traditional way is hard since a student has to master the basic movements and principles that comes with it. It means spending a lot of time on the basic drills and hitting coconut poles or branches of trees continuously for a period of time until you get to understand the sticky principle where your sticks actually adheres and follow the path of your opponent sticks and using it as a rail which will lead your sticks to the opponent's hand. Also there is a lot of sparring sessions with senior or junior students and even the Grandmaster himself.

Since the formation of the Modified Tapado under Grandmaster Mike Vasquez, learning Tapado is a lot better and easier because certain stick handling and drills training have been improved and modified so as to be generous to the hands which often take the hardest beatings from training and sparring. The modifications has something to do with evolutions of the art which most Grandmasters and teachers have seen and experienced then integrated it to the art without sacrificing the main essence and ingredients of the original art as envisioned by the original founder. The author and Grandmaster Mike

Vasquez came from the original group actually, but being an adept researcher and die hard martial art practitioner, Grandmaster Vasquez has seen something more that can be added and integrated to the Tapado system. The original Founder Nono Mamar was aware of the modifications and authorized Grandmaster Vasquez to go ahead with his Modified Tapado version and spread the Tapado throughout the world. Sensei Vasquez Founded the Modified Tapado International and Vasquez Modified Martial Arts International.



Advance Instructors refinement training.

If it is effective how come it is not popular compared to the conventional arnis? Why are there only few practitioners? These are the most often asked questions of those who first heard of Tapado. First of all, Tapado is long stick fighting and not a lot of people really want to learn long sticks since you

can't carry it casually. Second there's no empty hand disarming or fanciness of complicated numerous strikes. In reality, Tapado is not inclusive on long stick use alone but its striking principles can readily be applied in short sticks. Tapado is not meant to replace the art of Arnis. Rather it is meant to augment and complement the art. The other reason why there are only few certified Tapado practitioners is because at that time, it was very hard to become a member of the original Tapado group. Acceptance or membership requires stringent screening by committee members. Strict guidelines as to your affiliations with other associations or clubs are strictly enforced. The committee handling the acceptance wants to limit membership and it was due to insistence of Sensei Mike that he was able to convince the founder to loosen up admissions so that this unique Filipino art can be spread globally. Ultimately, the Founder agreed but again, at this time only very few qualified Tapado Instructors have been produced.



Sitting (L-R): Grandmaster Dominador Ferrer, Grandmaster and Headmaster Mike Vasquez, Master Instructor Joe Tan, Master Instructor Ric Barraca.

Standing (L-R): Master Instructor Jun Villaluna, Senior Instructor Jun Siason, Instructor Trainee Droebl Castillo, Master Instructor Henried Lamayo, and Advance Instructor Tony Aguirre.

Footnote:

The author is a certified Master Instructor of Modified Tapado, Master Instructor of Lapu-Lapu Vinas Arnis Aficionado, Certified Instructor of Ricarte Arnis, Black Belt Shotokan Karate. Joe Tan has trained personally with the following Grandmasters. The late Grandmasters Jose Vinas and Nono Mamar, and Grandmaster Mike Vasquez. Joe Tan is the sole Representative in California of Vasquez Modified Tapado International.

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Insights on Modified Tapado from an Average Joe

By Jeremy Kirk G. Chavez

FMA, what does this mean? What is the first thing that comes to mind for an average Joe like me?

FMA is short for Filipino Martial Arts. The first thing that comes to an average Joe's mind like mine is Arnis. Arnis, Kali, Baston, Eskrima among other numerous references all refer to the same thing and that is the art of stick fighting that has been uniquely developed and systematized in the Philippines. One would almost always hear old people in various parts of the Islands use these references interchangeably.

Why should Arnis be the only thing that comes to mind? Why not? It has only been the most popular or probably the only martial art that is known to have been

developed in the Philippines and exported around the world. Well, that is again for the average Joe like me.

The notion that Arnis being the most popular stick fighting method in the Philippines and probably around the world, or the only Martial Art developed in the Philippines for that matter is slowly being changed. The art of Tapado, specifically the Art of Modified Tapado is slowly making its mark.

The Art of Arnis and Tapado both use sticks for fighting. The latter, however, uses a longer stick than the former. Furthermore, Tapado is descended from Arnis. I first heard and saw the power of Tapado, specifically Modified Tapado, when I was a student at Sensei Mike Vasquez's Dojo back in the late ninety's in Bacolod City, Philippines. I was studying Sensei Mike's Modified Karate Method that time.

Sensei Mike, it seems, has a knack for challenging and modifying established martial arts concepts. The result is his modified version of karate and his modified version of Tapado.

With Sensei Mike's modified karate one would almost have a hard time if not unable to block a standard punch or kick with a standard karate block. An overstatement one might say. I wish. I have had my fair share of sprains, bruises and bone aches if I may add, just trying to block Sensei Mike's modified karate attacks and he wasn't even using half his strength! The fun doesn't stop there. To the untrained eye one couldn't even see any difference from the punches or kicks being taught in various schools of today.

What's so special with the technique? I wish I could elaborate but words would not be enough. Personally, I think one would have to learn and experience it first hand. One need only sample this technique from a well trained student of Sensei's and you, I guarantee, will have a hard time explaining how the attack got through you Sensei Mike's Modified Tapado isn't so much different from his modified karate, if not just as puzzling as ever. Tapado has only two strikes! Two strikes that you just cannot understand how those strikes get through you. Yes, two seemingly simple, uncouth and un-ceremonial strikes from a bystander from the street corner.

The terms for the various strikes are undoubtedly Hiligaynon, the vernacular for most of the Western part of Negros Island in the Philippines from where the Tapado has been developed and modified. The word Tapado itself is Hiligaynon which is loosely translated as "you're done; you're finished" Indeed the obvious purpose of Tapado is to finish you off the soonest. What more efficient way to reach this goal than to strike the enemy with pure brute force? Yes, brute force. You strike with everything you have but still maintain control of your stick.

How is this possible? What Tapado lacks in grace and style it compensates for effectiveness. This no nonsense art has only two strikes from which a multitude of other techniques follow. From these techniques you will learn to strike your strongest and still maintain control over you stick. Do not be deceived by the seemingly simple, childish and unrefined strikes. To dismiss the art simply on the basis of how simple it looks is really a fatal mistake.

Again, much like modified karate Sensei Mike doesn't make it much easier to the untrained eye to spot the difference between a Tapado strike and your run amok style of striking. One would have to have first hand experience on this art to really appreciate and know that the Art of Tapado is no exaggeration. The trembling, aching hands and the

stick you have just lost or dropped after coming face to face with a Tapado master will truly make you feel how powerful and effective a Tapado strike is. This sole experience will surely be more than enough to convince you that this emerging Filipino martial art is a no nonsense fighting art that can certainly walk its talk.

Tapado of late has slowly been making its existence known not just as fighting technique but also as a factor to help develop self control and discipline. Studying and learning this form of stick fighting will surely instill in you discipline and self control. Owing to the brute nature of the technique one needs no explanation why one should not hasten to a fight. The consequence of using this form of fighting if applied in the streets is undoubtedly fatal.

Sensei Mike's modified techniques seem too good to be true. Believe me this is how I felt when I was starting out with modified karate. It's funny I can't say the same with modified Tapado when I started out late last year. Probably because I have already been exposed to modified karate to know well enough that this stick fighting isn't all just form and no substance. But enough talk already. The best technique is only as good as the person who wields it. To all you average Joe's like me out there all we can do for now is to practice, practice and practice!!!

Red Corner Gym, Hotel Intercontinental, Makati, Philippines



Jeremy Kirk Chavez (R) with Advanced Instructor Tony Aguirre (L) executing pigar technique.



Jeremy Kirk Chavez (R) with Advanced Instructor Tony Aguirre (L) executing Ordinario strike.



Jeremy Kirk Chavez (R) with Advanced Instructor Tony Aguirre (L).



Jeremy Kirk Chavez (L) with Advanced Instructor Tony Aguirre (M) and Master Henried Lamayo after practice.

About the author:

Jeremy Kirk Chavez is a student of Grandmaster Mike Vasquez on Modified Karate and Modified Tapado during the nineties and is an active practitioner of the art. He is presently connected with Smart Communications as Switch Engineer. He is an Electronics and Communications Engineer (ECE).

The Essence of Modified Tapado

By Henried Jose B. Lamayo
Bacolod City

The Rise of Modified Tapado

Modified Tapado or Tapado as it is generically known, has gained popularity and become a byword among Martial Artists and various Arnis organizations around the world. The recent World FMA Festival held in Tagaytay City, Philippines has brought to a huge crowd of Filipino martial arts practitioners the power and grace of Modified Tapado. Those who participated in the actual exchange of blows during the seminars have gained much needed insight to this lethal art. However, those who have been skeptical remained to be skeptics, having no basis for their criticisms of Modified Tapado. Having no basis, they continue to be grossly uninformed and misled until they learn Modified Tapado by heart. That is, not by mere theorizing or philosophizing. For only those who learned Modified Tapado by heart can criticize and tell the world what Modified Tapado is or what it is not.

What is Modified Tapado?

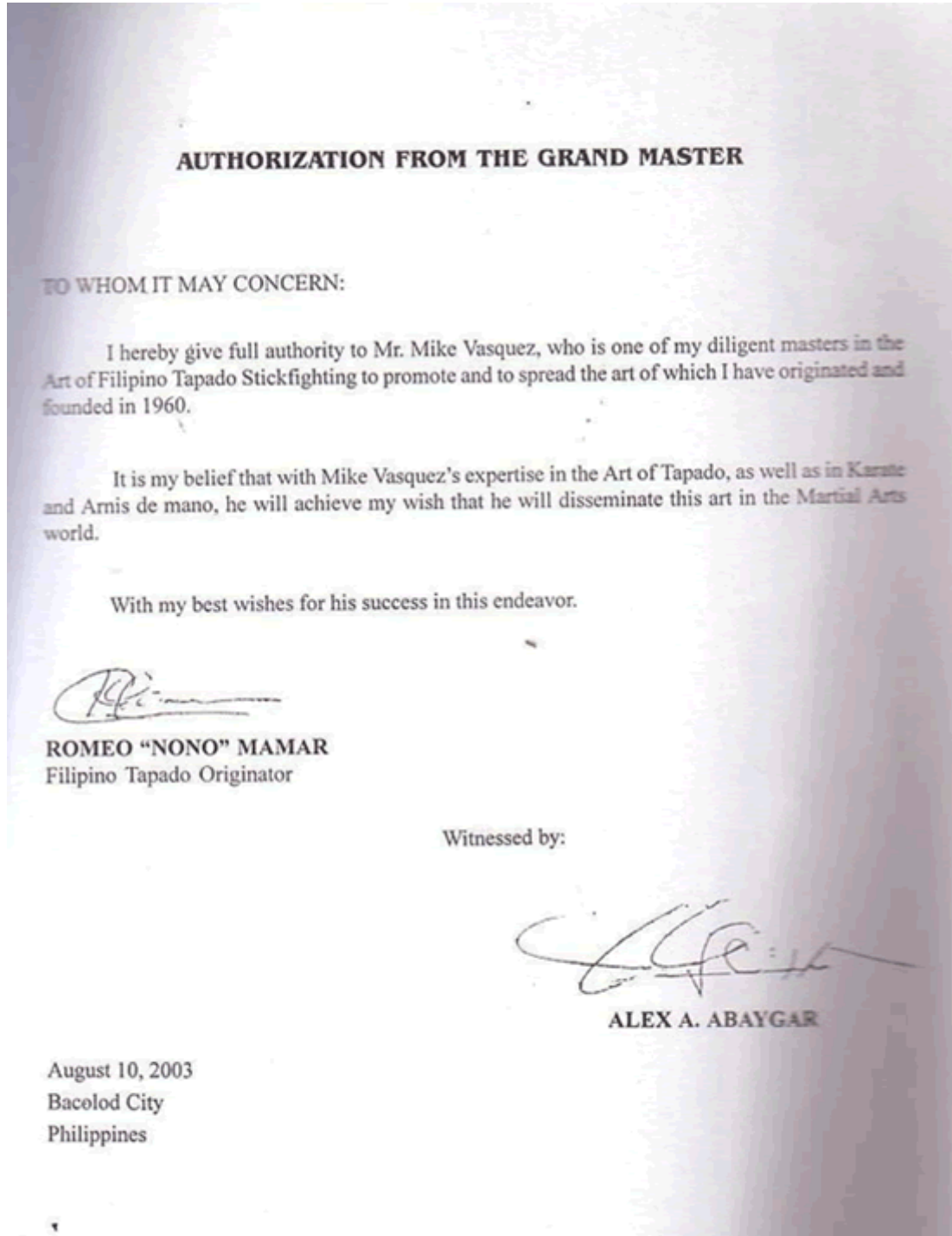
So, what is Modified Tapado? What makes it different from its traditional counterpart that makes it worthy of scholarly study and dedication? Scholars from various disciplines agree that it is *futile* to discuss or even argue about a certain subject unless such a subject is clearly defined and its parameters understood. Without clarity and much needed understanding one cannot engage in a scholarly discussion on any topic concerning Modified Tapado simply because one is not qualified to do so.

Modified Tapado has been derived from traditional Tapado which was originated by Grandmaster Romeo Mamar of Bago City, Negros Occidental, Philippines in the 1960s. With unwavering dedication to this unique long stick style of Arnis, Grandmaster Mike Vasquez fused key scientific principles and esoteric knowledge thereby raising the art to a higher plane, thus, the birth of Modified Tapado. Grandmaster Mike Vasquez has brought the art to such a high level that one day after a rigid sparring session with Grandmaster Romeo Mamar, the latter told Grandmaster Mike Vasquez that there was nothing left to teach him. True to the spirit of martial arts, Grandmaster Mike Vasquez pursued an even more rigid training this time testing and proving the scientific principles he had fused resulting to the refinement of Modified Tapado. The word “Modified” was to indicate the scientific principles and esoteric knowledge fused with the martial art, and the word “Tapado” was to express his lifelong loyalty and respect to the Grand Master and originator of Tapado - Grandmaster Romeo Mamar.

In August 10, 2003, Grandmaster Romeo Mamar authorized Grandmaster Mike Vasquez to propagate Modified Tapado to the Martial Arts world. A copy of the Authorization can be found in the book: “The Fundamentals of Tapado, Arnis Long Stick

Art of fighting. Copyright Mike Vasquez, 2004". Grandmaster Mike Vasquez is the only prodigy known to have been granted a written *Authorization* to propagate the art of Modified Tapado.

Below: A scanned copy of the Authorization given to Grandmaster Mike Vasquez by Grandmaster Romeo Mamar.



Modified Tapado: It's Significance to Filipino Martial Arts

The study and propagation of Modified Tapado to Filipino martial artists and the world is imperative not only because it is seemingly new but because it is an authentic Filipino Martial Art. It is true that there are other long stick styles of Arnis being taught and propagated in the Philippines and the world. But after close observation of these other long stick Arnis styles one may surmise that these styles closely resemble the fighting arts of other countries. Modified Tapado on the other hand, does not resemble anything foreign. This is because Modified Tapado is an authentic and unique Filipino Martial Art. From its humble roots in Bago City it has reached Bacolod City and in the hands of Grandmaster Mike Vasquez continues to evolve and reach out to the world. It is truly a martial art Filipinos can truly identify with.

Modified Tapado: Its Nature and Purpose

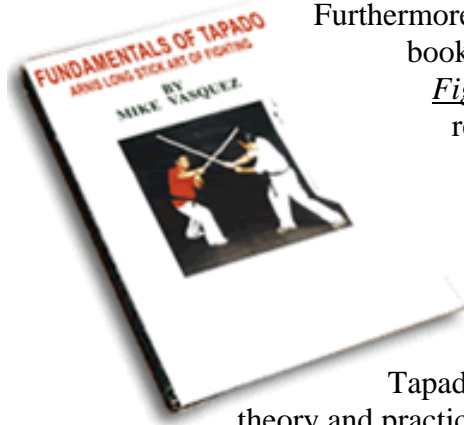
Modified Tapado, having been derived from its traditional predecessor, is consistently characterized by the use of a coffee stick with a length of forty seven inches and a circumference of 3 and ½ to 4 inches in diameter, more or less. However, other types of sticks maybe used such as the *kalamunding* and *tula-tula*. The weapon is held by both hands and chambered from the shoulder blade of either of the shoulders. A weapon held like this has but one and only one purpose: To destroy anyone or anything in its path and finish the fight soonest. It doesn't matter whether the opponent is attacking or defending himself. The stick will literally find its way and crush the opponent where he stands. The last man standing is unscathed.

Modified Tapado: The Lethal Art and Science of Killing with One Blow.

Upon learning the very nature and purpose of Modified Tapado, one may ask: *Is Modified Tapado merely an art or is it science?* Obviously, Modified Tapado is an *art* in itself. While certain methods and techniques are taught systemically to make its delivery deadly accurate, certain personal preferences or style of its individual practitioners make their approaches to combat vary in many ways. Such differences in personal preferences contribute in making one Modified Tapado practitioner's way of fighting look different in the eyes of observers. In much the same way, these individual differences contributes to differences in Modified Tapado's "look" and "feel".

On the other hand, intensive and extensive experimentation involved in the in-depth study of the application of scientific principles fused in Modified Tapado such as: the principles of how to properly wield the stick, getting to the crucial point, angling, the maximum efficient use of power, striking the opponent at his blind side, body kinetics, technique escalation and fusion all make Modified Tapado a *science*. A strong affirmation of the science of Modified Tapado is the manner of applying *pigar* in the delivery of strikes. In one occasion where a demonstration of Modified Tapado was given, three medical doctors noted that the *modification of pigar prevented* the development of the medical condition called *Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS)* - the condition that results when the Median Nerve is being pinched. The pinching of the nerve (a medical condition referred to officially as Nerve Entrapment) causes numbness and tingling in the area of the hand that the nerve travels to. Without the modifications made those who trained may have ended up with what medical doctors call Repetitive Strain Injuries (RSIs).

Symptoms of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS) are follows: A tingling or numb feeling in the hand and/or fingers; shooting pains in the wrist or forearm, and sometimes extending to the shoulder, neck and chest, or foot, and difficulty clenching the fist or grasping small objects. This injury is prevented by Modified Tapado by modifying the pigar. Even more unique and intriguing are the esoteric knowledge that reinforces Modified Tapado, but this in itself would require a separate book.



Furthermore, the use of a standard curriculum, and use of the book: *Fundamentals of Tapado. Arnis Long Stick Art of Fighting Copyright Mike Vasquez, 2004* as standard reference and text book in teaching and learning Modified Tapado, and the inclusion of Modified Tapado in the training programs of other well-established Arnis/Kali organizations in different parts of the world makes Modified Tapado a *discipline* as well. Thus, when a student of martial arts undertakes to learn Modified Tapado, he/she is assured of high quality training in both theory and practice - putting substance into form.

Modified Tapado: Methodologies of Teaching and Learning

Great masters of old have passed on martial knowledge to dedicated students by word of mouth. The same body of knowledge was preserved in scrolls for the next generation of dedicated students. Techniques and other fighting methods were also preserved in so-called forms known as *anyo* in Pilipino or *kata* in Japanese. In much the same way, Modified Tapado has its own methods of teaching and learning minus the forms. Rather than transmit martial knowledge by way of forms, Modified Tapado masters perform drills with their students over and over again until a particular technique is learned. Drills are carried out in three ways: weapon-to-weapon, hand-to-hand, and *hutik* or *whispers*.

The *weapon-to-weapon* drill is a repetitive striking exercise focusing on a particular technique using a Tapado stick against another weapon. It could be another Tapado stick, a bladed weapon or any non-projectile weapon of more or less the same length. This type of drill enables the student to learn how to differentiate the attributes of one weapon from another and provides insight as to how to defeat an opponent with such a weapon in actual combat.

The *hand-to-hand* drill may be used to augment the weapon-to-weapon drill in order to facilitate learning and increase the student's sensitivity and awareness. This drill utilizes bare handed strikes applying the techniques of Modified Tapado.

The *hutik* or *whisper* is most unique. It is not a striking drill of any sort. Rather, the *hutik* is an *oracle* from the master while overseeing the training and performance of a student in the Modified Tapado drills. It comes as an *inspiration* usually when the master sees that a dedicated student should be passed to the next higher technique of Modified Tapado. Usually after receiving the *hutik*, a student's skill and performance in drills and sparring are greatly enhanced.

Modified Tapado: Experiencing versus Philosophizing

As soon as Modified Tapado has taken flight enthusiasts have tried to get their hands dirty by trying it out, oftentimes forgetting to empty themselves of accumulated irrelevant martial arts experiences. They forget to unlearn so to speak, instead, they attempt to conceptualize and philosophize Modified Tapado based on their irrelevant experiences. Dabblers often fail to realize that the *minimalist* art of Modified Tapado has a science of its own. They fail to realize that the best way to learn and understand Modified Tapado is by going through its established discipline rather than by picking up bits and pieces of incoherent “knowledge” in the vain attempt of trying to come up with a bigger “whole”. The best way to learn Modified Tapado is to *learn by doing* Modified Tapado with absolute and unwavering devotion to its art, science, and discipline. Only through the process of learning by experience can the principles be tested again and again for reliability and validity. Refuse experience and you get a sure ticket to failure.

One sure way to test and prove whether a martial artist has failed or not in his study of Modified Tapado is to ask: How many moves does it take to make a Modified Tapado strike? A dabbling martial artist would usually say that there are two to three movements. One who is well-trained in Modified Tapado, however, would say that this is not so. Another test to identify a dabbler is by observing training attitude. We learn by doing. That is, by constant striking and sparring. Understanding the principles by living the moment - feeling the stick, the power, and the destructive impact. A dabbler who keeps busy conceptualizing and philosophizing when the opponent’s stick is unleashed with lethal force will end-up injured in training and dead in actual combat.

Modified Tapado: Its Heart and Appearance

In the eyes of the untrained Modified Tapado is too simple and in the early stages of training it can even seem boring. Some see a single Modified Tapado blow to be a series of different movements. And some may see many different and distinct techniques as one and the same. Such is the riddle of Modified Tapado. For the dedicated practitioner of Modified Tapado such a riddle has found its answer through experience. An adept can even tell how many techniques have been fused in one simple blow when he receives it during training, and, is able to deliver the same whenever situation demands. What appears to be a simple Modified Tapado blow when delivered by an adept may contain a fusion of up to twenty techniques and right at the heart of it is the intention of crushing the opponent without the possibility of second chances.

Modified Tapado: Its Secrets and Demons

A first glance at this section’s subtitle may give a reader the impression that Modified Tapado has similarities with other older disciplines of Arnis. Perhaps this is due to the fact that some Arnis disciplines are perceived to be linked with the practice *oracion* - secret prayers of invincibility and power - and perform some sort of secret ritual in line with their Arnis discipline. Examining books about Arnis that have been published before would reveal that such elements have been presented. There may even be claims of invincibility as a result of such practices. Modified Tapado practitioners have no such practices and claims. In the case of Modified Tapado, there is only one and only one ritual and that is training. Why then do we make mention of secrets and demons? It is because most people who have been awed by the sheer destructive power of Modified Tapado think that there are certain secrets hidden in the art itself. Warriors of old who

seem to be gifted in martial knowledge are believed to be performers of oracion. Reading through this section will dispel this belief and reveal what real secrets Modified Tapado holds. These secrets are securely deposited in the hearts of those who have taken the path of Modified Tapado.

Dedicated martial artists stand out because of certain attributes that separate them from others who are not like them. Such attributes as loyalty, honesty, perseverance, and compassion may characterize those who have decided to pursue the Modified Tapado discipline. Such attributes are either innate or are developed in individual students as they pursue knowledge of the art.

But why touch on these attributes when pursuing Modified Tapado mastery? It is simply because these attributes are at the core of the secrets in mastering Modified Tapado.

Loyalty teaches that we stay in the right path when we study Modified Tapado. This involves studying and sharing experiences with fellow pursuers of the path, protecting the principles for which Modified Tapado stands for, and by following the tenets and good examples taught by our seniors. By doing so, we learn what is right and do what is right.

Honesty teaches that we be true to ourselves and our fellows when training and when engaging in combat. By being true to ourselves we accept our strengths and weaknesses. We capitalize on our strengths as we build-up skills as we train. On the other hand, as we recognize our weaknesses we learn to respect the strengths of others. By doing so, we gain insight on how to improve ourselves in training so that in combat we may be able to handle opponents with similar strengths with those whom we trained with.

Perseverance teaches us to press on towards the goal of mastery. Rigid training may cause us to be hit but that does not mean the end of it. When we get hit and are told of our mistakes we are given the opportunity to open our minds and learn. It teaches us to train harder and points out where we did wrong and teaches us how we could do better.

Perseverance tells us that it does not matter how many sticks we have broken or how many times we have been hit. It tells us how much we have learned in a day and makes us look forward to the next opportunity. Just as they say in the Philippine Marines: *“In training we sweat a little, we bleed a little. In combat, we have much enemy blood to draw”*. The saying holds true for those who are dedicated to pursue Modified Tapado mastery.

Compassion teaches us to sympathize and to empathize with others. To fellow followers of the path of Modified Tapado, those with a better grasp of the knowledge teach those who are eager to learn. In due time and place the knowledge of Modified Tapado is transmitted for the purpose of making others better not only in skill but in character.

Such attributes may be considered the secrets of Modified Tapado. They may very well be considered the first four steps of the journey. After taking the first four steps - the attainment of the secrets - the pursuer of the path realizes that the steps lead to infinity. Along the way, the pursuer encounters other steps such as endurance, power, flexibility, speed, and technique. In this realm of endless possibilities one may encounter problems in learning especially when unable to understand certain principles and techniques. It is in this realm where the four secrets will be tested along with the others. It is in this realm where all masters have gone to meet the *demon of exchange*. That is, the repetitive exchange of blows in sparring which may drain one into exhaustion. It is this repetitive process that teaches us to feel the blow and allows us to see up to the smallest

of details the principles at work in the different techniques that have been fused in each blow. In problem-solving analysts call this phenomenon: finding the demon in the details. The Merriam - Webster's dictionary defines the word demon as one that has exceptional enthusiasm, drive, or effectiveness <i.e., a demon for work>. In the context of Modified Tapado this is taken to mean one with the exceptional enthusiasm, drive, or effectiveness in training and training and training in Modified Tapado - because training is the only ritual of Modified Tapado.

Bunal: Modified Tapado's Statement of Finality

Ultimately, after key points about Modified Tapado are put in proper perspective, a good practitioner attains the realization in his heart that Modified Tapado is pure and simple. It is pure in the sense that it excludes anything that systematic tests have not proven. What does not work is not included in the arsenal of Modified Tapado. Whatever is fancy and sophisticated is a pollutant to the ecology of Modified Tapado and is naturally eliminated. There is an old warrior saying that goes something like: "*Dubious techniques will die with the warrior who attempted them in battle*".

Modified Tapado is *simple* in the sense that it is a minimalist art. As such, Modified Tapado finds beauty in simplicity. And if simple is beautiful, take a close look at Modified Tapado. It may only be the only martial art in the world teaching just two *methodical* blows or strikes. In Modified Tapado these two highly developed methodical blows are called "Bunal Uno" and "Dos". The word "bunal" literally means "*to smash*" or "*to crush*" and is the preferably used to describe Modified Tapado blows or strikes in training and in combat. This is because Modified Tapado has no pretensions. Once released from its chamber, the wielded stick intends to crush anything in its path whether it be the opponent's head, weapon, or any part of the body.

The bunal when effectively delivered gives a statement of finality - it finishes the fight as soon as it started. The opponent absorbs the full concentration of power and intent in one methodical blow. **Such is the essence of Modified Tapado.**

Glossary of Terms

Listed hereunder are the terminologies used in Modified Tapado and those used in the writing of this material.

Bunal - a local term used to refer to a Modified Tapado methodical strike

Coffee/Kalamunding/Tula-tula - Type of wood used in Modified Tapado stick fighting

Demon - in the context of Modified Tapado, it is a word used to mean *one that has exceptional enthusiasm, drive, or effectiveness*. In the context of problem-solving, it is a repetitive and exhaustive process; the problem (technique) that must be identified

Dos - the number two methodical strike of Modified Tapado

Hutik - a whisper; to whisper

Kali/Escrima/Arnis/Tapado - Various Filipino styles of stick fighting

Methodical - having gone through a scientific procedure

Modified - connotes fundamental changes to give new orientation.

Modified Tapado - The Filipino long stick fighting art developed by GM Mike Vasquez which was derived from Traditional Tapado

Oracion - secret prayers believed to give invincibility and power

Pigar - a method of holding the stick when delivering a Modified Tapado blow

Traditional - A customary pattern of thought, behavior, or action

Tapado/Traditional Tapado - The Filipino long stick fighting art originated by GM

Romeo Mamar

Uno - the number one methodical strike of Modified Tapado

About the Writer



Henried Jose B. Lamayo is a master of Modified Tapado, a 3rd Degree Black Belt in Judo, and a 2nd Degree Black Belt in Modified Karate. He has studied Dekiti-Tersia Seradas under his uncle Grandmaster Jerson Tortal and has undertaken to master Lapu-Lapu Viñas Arnis under Grandmaster Wilson Viñas another uncle. He is a reserved officer and received his training from the Philippine Marines in 1983, and the Philippine Navy in 1984.

Henried Jose B. Lamayo holds a Masters Degree in Management major in Public Management (U.P - Visayas). He was a former part-time professor in a Graduate School teaching Public Administration and has been a part-time college professor for fourteen years teaching information technology courses. He is a freelance consultant for technical writing and research for students of various undergraduate and graduate schools in his area, and has also assisted in training criminology students in a local university and volunteer organizations in Judo and self-defense.

Insights on the Uniqueness of Modified Tapado

By: Master Enrique “Ric” M. Barraca Jr.



I am a Tapado martial artist for more than 20 years and mentored by the Founder of Tapado, Grandmaster Romeo “Nono” Mamar himself. The discipline of practicing this martial art developed my confidence in applying it for self defense. Before his death, Grandmaster Mamar confided to me that he wants Grandmaster Mike Vasquez to spread the art of Tapado to the martial arts world.

Tapado as a discipline is a rigorous one. We used to practice after work for three hours a day. Through practice, I have learned to do simultaneous attack and defense, similar to blocking and hitting movements done in one count. However, such technique and combination of action cannot be executed properly without rhythmic body coordination.

The harmonization of the body movement is very vital in Tapado. As a matter of fact, it is the key to the strength of one’s attack.

Solid training background and knowledge of any martial arts is of great advantage in learning Tapado because the training is very rigid. As a result, most practitioners are discouraged due to demands in exercise or drills. Furthermore, it is always advisable to learn the arts from a well-trained Tapado instructor to avoid the risk of injuries.

It takes commitment to learn Tapado because it is not easy to grasp. Each strike is fatal and deadly. One strike may include a combination of techniques when delivered.

Modified Tapado has similarity to Modified Karate as taught by Grandmaster Mike Vasquez. Blocking and hitting can be done in one move. The only difference is that Tapado Martial Art uses a long stick while Modified Karate is an empty hand fighting.

Grandmaster Mike Vasquez's Modified Karate includes innovated advanced techniques such as the "cross method" and "simultaneous attack". These modified techniques are considered deadly and difficult to parry. Modified punches and kicks can penetrate despite the free style distance of the opponent.

I noted that during my heyday as a participant in karate tournaments in Manila and Zamboanga City, my kicks and punches can be blocked. But with Modified Karate of Sensei Mike Vasquez, you can control the moves of your opponent including hitting them at a target of your choice. This makes the art of modified karate unique and different style of empty hand fighting.

Modified Karate is distinct from other art. The same thing is true with Modified Tapado. As a beginner, you will not really feel the annoying pain in your hand. This makes it interesting for those who would like to learn the arts. I can assure you learning Tapado can change you as a person. You will not want to engage in trouble for you know that you are capable of disabling anybody in a split of a second.



Master Ric Barraca executing bunal dos in a modified forward stance.



Master Ric Barraca executing pigar technique against Advanced Instructor Tony Aguirre.

About the Author:

Enrique "Ric" M. Barraca Jr. is a Master, Modified Tapado and a 5th Dan Blackbelt Shotokan

Modified Tapado Historical Timeline

By: Senior Instructor Jimmy Efenio



Senior Instructor Jimmy Efenio about to perform Modified Tapado multi-directional strikes during the 3rd World FMA Festival at the Heritage Hotel, Pasay City, Philippines

As an accomplished martial artist, I fondly look back at the past and reminisce on the many experiences I have gone through, more particularly that part when I have studied alongside my sensei in the Filipino Long Stick Art of Tapado. Since its early beginnings in the 1960s up to the present, Tapado has so evolved that it has found acceptance in firmly established Arnis circles worldwide. This is perhaps due to the scientific principles and esoteric knowledge that intertwine with the Martial Art itself.

Tapado was founded in the 1960s by Grandmaster Romeo Mamar. It is simple and straightforward in its approach to combat yet so deadly effective that a fight can be finished as soon as it started. Literally, the word meant “finished” and ever since it’s founding, the art of the late Grandmaster Romeo Mamar was known only as Tapado.

Due to the simplicity and power, Sensei Mike Vasquez was drawn to the art. So in 1975 along with some of his dedicated students in karate, Sensei Mike Vasquez pursued the mastery of Tapado. Among those dedicated students were: the late Rene Cornel, Sonny Guanzon, and myself. There were others who followed our pursuit but dropped along the way due to harsh exchanges of blows during training and sparring. Hand injuries were so common at that time and were the usual reason for dropping out.

Sometime between 1975 and 1979 Sensei Mike started to dwell on thoughts of modifying the art and make it effective and efficient in training while maintaining its combat effectiveness. He shared these insights with Grandmaster Romeo Mamar who approved of it. Since then, Sensei Mike Vasquez continued his experiments with the modifications by trying them with other masters of martial arts. For my part, I have reached other parts of the country following the experiments myself. In 1990, I have experimented with some Arnis masters whom I have met in Palawan and have come up with similar results with Sensei Mike Vasquez’s experiments.

In the year 2003, Grandmaster Romeo Mamar granted Sensei Mike Vasquez the authority to spread Tapado to the world. This is after being fully convinced of the improvements of the modifications. This was the birth of Modified Tapado in the martial arts world. The word “Modified” tells the world of the scientific principles and esoteric knowledge fused in the art by Sensei Mike Vasquez. The word “Tapado” on the other hand expresses a lifelong loyalty to the originator of Tapado - Grandmaster Romeo Mamar.

To this day, when we talk about Tapado, we use the word “Tapado” or “Traditional Tapado” to refer to Grandmaster Romeo Mamar’s Tapado. And we use the word Modified Tapado to refer to Sensei Mike Vasquez’s Modified Tapado and innovations of that art.

About the Author:

Senior Instructor Jimmy Efenio is a long time student of Sensei Mike Vasquez in Shotokan Karate. He is one of the original students of Sensei Mike Vasquez on Modified Karate and is a 3rd Dan Blackbelt, Modified Karate and Senior Instructor, Modified Tapado. He is an instructor on Modified Karate of the Special Action Force of the Philippine National Police in Camp Crame, Quezon City, Metro Manila.



Senior Instructor Jimmy Efenio executing an Ordinario overpowering strike.

Who's Who in Modified Tapado



Grandmaster Mike Vasquez
Headmaster Vasquez Modified Tapado



Master Henried Lamayo



Master Ric Barraca



Master Ferdinand “Bobot” Gayoles



Master Jose “Joe” Valencia Tan
(U.S. based)



Senior Instructor Jimmy Efenio



Advanced Instructor
Antonio “Tony” Ivan Aguirre



Award-winning Martial Art Journalist Rodolfo
Vivero (U.S. based).



Guro Abner Anievas (right),
HK based of Kali Escrima Arnis Tapado (KEAT)
with Grandmaster Mike Vasquez (left).



Modern Arnis Chief Instructor Samuel “Bambit” Dulay (right) awarded Modified Tapado Instructor’s Certificate by Grandmaster Mike Vasquez (middle).



Europe based Modern Arnis Guro Dessa Ramos (left) and Philip Wolf (right) during advanced Modified Tapado training.



Sensei Mike Vasquez (fifth from right) with students in Makati, Philippines.

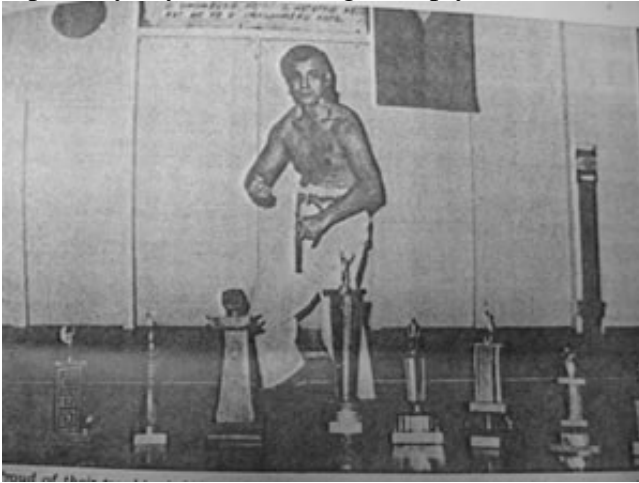
Master Jose “Joe” Valencia Tan (U.S. based)

Joe Tan was born of Filipino and Chinese ancestry on June 27, 1950 in Bacolod City, Negros Occidental, Philippines, where most of the great and well known martial artists have come from such as; the late Grandmaster Remy Presas, (Founder Modern Arnis), the late Grandmaster Nono Mamar, (Founder Tapado Long stick fighting), the late Grandmaster Jose Vinas (Founder of Lapu-Lapu Vinas Arnis Afficionado), the current Grandmaster Leo Gaje (Pekiti Tersia), Grandmaster Nene Tortal (Dekiti Tersia), Grandmaster Mike Vasquez (Founder of Modified Tapado and Modified Karate). Joe holds a bachelors’ degree in Management and a Bachelor of Law degree from the University of Negros Occidental - Recoletos.

He started his martial arts training at the age of 15. His urge to study self defense was prompted by an event when he was mistakenly attacked and mugged by a group of 7

gang members who simultaneously executed flying kicks and karate punches on him which caused him to fall down hard on the pavement. The kicking attack continued while he was still on the ground but Joe managed to grab a stone, quickly stood up and slapped it to the face of its leader which caused the latter to fall backwards. When the other members saw this, they all ran away but again regrouped and came rushing back for another wave of attack. This time Joe was able to pick up 3 larger stones and was able to hit 2 attackers right away. They all fled and never attacked again.

At that time, Joe has no knowledge about Karate or any self-defense system except from what he saw in the movies, it was just his instinct for survival to fight back. It was due to this incident that he realized martial arts knowledge is very important especially if you have to fight empty handed and more so, if your opponents are armed.



Sensei Mike Vasquez

According to Joe, he started taking Karate lessons with some unknown Karate clubs in the city until he heard about the quality of instructions in Vasquez Martial Arts Center. He took lessons in Shotokan Karate and finished the course.

Joe is a low profile martial artist and doesn't normally engage in any tournament except for club grading and promotion on which he has to fight with the various black belts to prove his skills and proficiencies under any belt he is

tested. Arnis came to life when Sensei Mike started offering optional courses on weapons handling. This includes stickfighting, Nunchaku, bull whip, Kama and Sai. Joe started with Nunchaku lessons first and after completing the course, he took stick fighting lessons. His teacher is well versed in Ricarte and Encruzada style of arnis and passed all of it on to Joe. According to his teacher, he had learned these very old and original arts from the two great grandmasters of arnis: Professor Amador Chavez and Professor Juan Lawan respectively.

Career-wise, Joe was at one point Regional Sales Manager of Pepsi-Cola International during which he supported and sponsored almost all the Local, Regional and International Arnis events in the Province. It was during these various special events, tournaments and demonstrations, that he noted the fascinating empty hand disarming presented by various Masters, Grandmasters including visitors from abroad. Witnessing these series of empty hand to hand maneuvers further stirred Joe's interest in the art of stick fighting, especially disarming. This led Joe to seek further knowledge about arnis and baston handling. His meeting with Grandmaster Jose Vinas (Founder of Vinas/Lapulapu Arnis Aficionado) was by no means arranged nor done by referral. It was during one of his field market surveys and inspections (as required by his job position) that he found a small gym/club offering arnis lessons located at the back of a store. Joe came back to find an old mean looking and muscular guy sitting on the chair. This was Grandmaster Jose Vinas. As Joe recalled, the Grandmaster was serious looking and

started shooting questions such as: “what’s your intention in coming? What club do you belong to? What do you know about stick fighting? Show me! Who referred you here?”

Later, he was told that there’s a lessons behind this type of behavior. Grandmaster Vinas wanted to teach and admit only serious practitioners. During that time, it was very hard to be a new member of a particular club if you are already a member of a different club.

Since Joe was already a member of another arnis club, it was a conflict. Joe was told to come back the following day to be informed of his decision. Before he left, he told Grandmaster Vinas that he didn’t even know him, nor have any information on how effective his system was. Nobody referred him to the Vinas club and he doesn’t know much about the art and has nothing to show. He told the old grandmaster that his main intention is to learn his art for personal advancement only.

Understandably, during those days, most of the older schools of arnis were suspicious of the intentions of the new member. It is because of the strategy of some schools to send and enroll a decoy /student to learn the art or system of another school, study it, break it down and develop counter moves. Also, it is a well known tradition that most of these older systems were being practiced and passed on only to family members, close family friends and relatives and occasionally by referrals. Money was never a factor in one’s acceptance.



Grandmaster Jose Vinas

Joe came back the following day and was surprised that the atmosphere was completely different. He found the old man already smiling in the doorstep waiting for him. He told Joe that he had prayed and received signs from the Holy Spirit that it was alright to accept him as a member. This was the start of their long and lasting relationship.

Grandmaster Vinas is a very religious man, he hadn’t attained proper education, especially martial arts of any form. He told Joe, that all his techniques and abilities are God given and just came naturally thru his dreams. He would wake up in the middle of the night and woke her wife so he could rehearse the various techniques of striking and disarming that he had just dreamed. Vinas Arnis has no standard forms of fighting since what is being taught or showed today will not be repeated tomorrow. Differences are common by the hour too. His style of teaching flows as the fighting circumstances change. That’s why most of his advance students have different versions of execution in any particular technique of blows and disarming. Although, later on as time passed some of the dedicated members recorded the various movements and counter movements for their own personal references and guidance. The Grandmaster told Joe, that he usually went deep into the mountains to meet these “KALAKI” tribesmen and tried his stick fighting abilities with them. According to him these tribesmen, were using sticks for survival in the mountains, both in hunting and in defending themselves from any unwanted attacks by human or wild animals. He said the trip to this place is somewhat a religious retreat and sometimes amulets in various forms would show up depending upon proper timing. He also mentioned to Joe that every All

Saints Day, he would make a trip to the cemetery to pick up one particular stick as a gift from the Holy Spirit. Joe attested to have seen two of these strange looking arnis sticks.

Vinas Arnis has produced only a handful, but mostly skillful and dedicated students. It's because at the earlier stages of training, a lot of students could not withstand the pain associated with the various strikes, and the disarming methods employed by the Grandmaster and his advance instructors. During those times, armor and protective gear was not available. So, it was a hard way of learning, because according to him, fighting isn't a game and better deal with it accordingly. And since the Vinas Systems, has no standard forms at that time, the various uncharted methods actually helps one to be good in intercepting and counterattacking.

Joe still remembers the Grandmaster would sometimes walk about 10 km, early in the morning (about 5 - 6 am) to Joe's house and wake him up just to rehearse what he had dreamed the night before. He would then discuss religious matters in relations to martial arts. He would often advise Joe to be strong on his belief about the Power of God, because, it will help one eliminate one's enemy. His favorite phrase is "God is with me, who will be against me?" His maxim: Your Techniques are within my techniques, so you will be defeated. Joe greatly values the time and the training that he experienced with the Great Grandmaster Joe Vinas. To date, the organization is being run by his son, Headmaster Nono Vinas.



Headmaster Mike Vasquez
and Tapado Founder Nono Mamar.

Tapado came be a part of Joe's training when Sensei Mike Vasquez (Joe's Karate teacher) was shown some stick fighting movements and strikes that are so powerful yet required less effort. These intriguing movements piqued Sensei Mike's interests to pursue the Founder Nono Mamar. He personally learned from him lengthily and eventually mastered the art of Tapado.

According to Joe, when Sensei Mike was in the advance stage of his study, Joe took lessons on Tapado from him. Joe became a sparring student of Sensei Mike

where the latter will teach and execute techniques and movements he learned from the founder. As a result, Sensei Mike passed on to Joe all the lessons he had learned and practiced with him all the moves and counter moves.

This format lasted more than a one year and a half, when Sensei Mike recommended Joe to be accepted into the Tapado Club. Joe's application was blocked right away by the head of committee handling acceptance of new members. It was because Joe was also a student of another stick fighting club (Vinas Arnis) at that time.

They questioned Joe's intentions and loyalty to the organization. Sensei Mike again interceded in Joe's behalf and convinced the founder of the former's good and sincere intention in joining the organization. Joe was finally accepted but unfortunately had to undergo basic training again thru his Senior Instructor Rene Cornel who then after several months passed on his training to the Head Instructor Bebing Lobrido. The training was tough and physically demanding because of the requirements of almost non-stop sparring with the juniors, seniors and the head instructor himself. This lasted for another year again until Joe was finally turned over to Grandmaster Nono Mamar as his private student. At that time the founder's schedule was so tight for private lessons that one had to wait for an open schedule since he could only do so much in a day because of the nature of the training. After a long and enduring training with the founder, Joe was handed his certificate of completion of the Original Tapado Course. Then Joe took further refinement training for Instructorship and ultimately was issued another certificate as a Certified Instructor of Original Tapado.



Jose Tan and Founder Nono Mamar

In 1986 Joe left for the United States to join his wife and seek better opportunities. He became a business man, heading up his own corporation. After about 10 years Joe went back to the Philippines and found that the Tapado Organization had split into two groups: The Original Tapado Association, headed by Grandmaster and Inheritor Bebing Lobrido and the Modified Tapado International founded by Grandmaster and Headmaster Mike Vasquez. Joe's former mentor and friend Sensei Mike had added his own touch and experience as a Karate Champion to the Tapado system and founded the Modified Tapado group.

Joe, being a dedicated and lifetime member of Mike Vasquez Martial Arts Center, automatically became a member of Modified Tapado Group. Joe had to undergo training again as to the various aspects of modifications introduced by Grandmaster Vasquez. This modification training was handled personally by Grandmaster Vasquez and only a few handpicked and dedicated Advance Instructors were given this privilege. Joe was promoted to Senior Instructor of Modified Tapado. After about a year and a half of refinement training, Joe was again promoted to Master Instructor of Modified Tapado and was designated as the sole representative of Vasquez Modified Tapado International in California.

From Vasquez Martial Art School, Joe has earned Black Belt Degree in Shotokan Karate (Joe didn't pursue a higher belt since he focused his attention on stick fighting and disarming and weaponry). He also finished the Nunchaku course, and became a certified Ricarte Arnis Instructor. From another school, Joe is a Certified Master Instructor of Vinas Lapu-Lapu Arnis Aficionado. Joe has also cross-trained in Muay Thai System.

Joe feels very lucky and privileged to have trained personally and forged friendship with the original founders of these three Arnis groups that have made their

own unique contributions in the propagation of stick fighting as an Art. He has lot to share with the world.

Senior Instructor Jose Tan can be contacted at:

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Panorama City, CA. 91402

Tel. (818) 904-9156

Email

Isaias Gonzales Ginson **Modified Tapado Propagator in Texas, U.S.A.**



Mr. Isaias Ginson is currently the propagator of Vinas Lapu-Lapu Arnis and Modified Tapado in Texas. He has over 15 years experience in arnis including Traditional Tapado from Master Nelson Carmona and the late Sensei Rene Cornel and Modified Tapado with Master Joe Tan. Mr. Ginson has also received instructions from varied styles of Arnis in the Philippines including Espada y Daga from Grandmaster Fortunato “Atong” Garcia of Yaming Arnis, WEDO arnis of Grandmaster Jesus Pallorina, and Bahala Na Arnis Giron System.

Here under are the excerpts of our interview with Mr. Isaias “Tata” Ginson:

Q. *What are your formal teaching qualifications?*

A. I am a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Literature and Philosophy graduate with a Masters in Physical Education 2000 (UP Diliman), and a Ed.D. Religious Ed. and Values Ed. (cand.) at De La Salle University.

Q. *When did you start your martial arts training?*

A. I started late already in my life. I was in college when I got into contact with Sifu George Tabangcura, Shaolin Su Wushu and started learning knife, sword forms, empty hands, and nunchako. Since I was an active member in the church and was doing missionary work, I had to put it off for a while.

Q. *When did you started back to your training?*

A. It was 1988. In Bacolod City where I live, I always pass by this martial arts club. I was interested in it since it was basically an arnis club that one day I dropped by and inquired. It was an old man that welcomed me in. Later did I realize it was Grandmaster Jose Vinas, teacher of two great Kali Grandmasters here in the United States. He was the first one who taught me the basics of arnis. His style of teaching was from the old school. He

would teach it according to situations and circumstances. He would teach you the basics strikes and defenses but would vary the techniques depending on the situation or problem you got yourself in. There is a term for that...OIDO. Play by ear. His style was a very practical one. It was combative and whose basic orientation was the blade.

Now his son, Head Master Wilson "Nonong" Vinas is the inheritor of the style. His ability to study his father's unique style and his own understanding and knowledge of arnis has truly allowed Vinas arnis to stay on top. I can say that Vinas arnis at this point of its development is much wider and deeper in scope.

Q. I heard many Filipino families have their own style of arnis. Was there any one in your family who knew arnis?

A. As far as I can remember there were a lot of them. It was from both sides of my parents. The most notable ones were from my father's side. My father's uncle was known as a Grandmaster in his time. But the terms Grandmaster or Master was not even used at that time. His name was Leoncio Ginson. He was a captain in the guerilla warfare against the Japanese and later promoted to major in the military. His exploits has become legendary among his peers that it is not even worth mentioning because people who not believe it. If I asked around about his style, nobody knows about it. People just called it OIDO.

Q. How did come across studying Tapado?

A. I first came across Tapado in the middle eighties. It was during a meditation camp retreat that Sensei Rene Cornel showed the group a demonstration of the art. It was so powerful that I thought would put all arnis style in question as to their effectiveness against this 44 inches stick. Since Sensei Rene wasn't the type of person who teaches, he would once in while, in our talks and get together, teach us some techniques.

Q. Why is that?

A. Sensei Rene was coming from the old school that you have to earn it in terms of conduct, good personal character and loyalty. That is the reason why, it was very difficult for him to divulge what he knew of the art. He has to be totally convinced that you are not going to use the art for other purposes other than personal self defense.

Q. Did you go through formal training in Tapado?

A. Since Sensei Rene was teaching us only during his spare time and that I wanted to learn more of the art, I found myself wandering and looking for a teacher. I found Master Nelson Carmona of the Traditional Tapado and started learning from him.

Q. How was the training?

A. It was hard and hand breaking. Since we were using a longer and bigger sticks one cannot sustain the blows for long. Even if it was stick to stick hits, the power and technique of the delivery was just awesome. We would start just warming up with some individual Uno/Dos strikes to the ground and move to the different levels of the techniques. The art of Modified Tapado is unique because as you progress from one level to another, each level is a counter of the preceding one. So if there is a sparring, you will know yourself if your opponent has reach a higher degree immediately upon contact of

the sticks. Because when the moment comes for engagement, there is no more time to counter. You will get hit and the fight is over.

Q. *Do you have something written or any literature on Tapado?*

A. The Modified Tapado group lead by Grandmaster Mike Vasquez has launched his book on Modified Tapado. Master Joe Tan, Master Instructor of California, U.S.A has copies book.

Q. *Final question, what do you think would be the future of Modified Tapado in the U.S.A.?*

A. Designated Head Master Joe Tan, who is currently based in California, is very optimistic of the introduction of Tapado in the US. He believes, after 20 years, just laying low from the lime light, Tapado is going to be the future of stick fighting in the US. Arnis/Eskrima will be there and Tapado will be there to compliment it or even make all stick fighters better.

Samuel “Bambit” Dulay

Chief Instructor, Modern Arnis

By Des Arellano

IMAFP in Full Support of Modified Tapado

“The primary purpose of the International Modern Arnis Federation of the Philippines is to support all forms of Filipino Martial Arts,” Says Master Samuel “Bambit” Dulay, IMAFP Chief Instructor.

And in line with this mission, the IMAFP is a staunch supporter of Modified Tapado, a local martial art that utilizes long sticks three times heavier than Arnis sticks. It’s weapon is similar to Japan’s kendo stick in length but it utilizes different and unique combative techniques and principles. Tapado focuses on strength training, because as its name implies, a single blow should be enough to neutralize an opponent.

Tapado was established by Grandmaster Nono Mamar and was modified by Grandmaster Mike Vazquez, Master Dulay’s former Karate instructor and an avid Tapado practitioner.

As Grandmaster Vazquez led a quiet life in Negros Occidental, Master Bambit wanted to help revive his friend and mentor’s martial arts career. And instead of Karate only, Master Bambit highlighted Grandmaster Vazquez’s Tapado expertise.

Master Bambit is impressed with Grandmaster Vazquez’s innovations, which paved the way for Modified Tapado. “He shortened Tapado’s one year training program



IMAFP Senior Master Dulay (L) with Grandmaster Mike Vasquez (C) and KEAT Guro Abner Anievas (R)

to 6 months. Grandmaster Vazquez changed the way the weapon is held and the stances, among others.”



Grandmaster Vazquez, Master Dulay and training group.

With the support of Master Dulay and the IMAFP, Modified Tapado is now a part of the IMAFP's Filipino martial arts curriculum. Grandmaster Vazquez has already conducted several seminars on Modified Tapado, the most memorable of which was during the First Bakbakan Festival. His organization, Modified Tapado International, is now in alliance with the **IMAFP**.

Tapado = The Striking Distance

By Abner P. Anievas



The Art of Tapado started in 1960. Grandmaster Romeo Mamar founded the art of Tapado which utilizes a 45 to 47 inch cane/staff held at one end with both hands. The art has only two strikes in its repertoire, the bunal uno and bunal dos...

However my interest in the art, started when I was practicing Kampilan. Tired of the heavy broad sword I pickup my jo which I used in Aikido training and started wielding the jo in a Kampilan Strike manner, after the practice I feel great and began doing my research about

the Art. Thanks to today's technology, you can now study and research almost all Martial Arts and provide you with the basic information.

My journey to the Art of Tapado even grows bigger when I met one of the Senior Instructors of Modified Tapado Master Tony Aguirre. He explained and helped me understand the Art of Tapado and open my eyes to a powerful weapon...Striking Distance.

Eventually I met up with Grandmaster Mike Vasquez and he clear all the doubts I have in mind about this Art. His books and Video help me a lot in my training as a guide for correct posture and body movement.

What I like about Tapado is its effectiveness in self-defense scenario. In my view about real fighting, you have to be as far from your opponent but enough to have a counter strike. Training Tapado improves my body movements when am demonstrating Kampilan in my seminars.

The Art of Tapado is often overlooked due to there not being any fancy movements, but who needs graceful movement...if I can stop an aggressor with one strike I will. As one of Filipino Martial Arts Goals..." finish the job as quickly as Possible."

I can see a bright future ahead of this Art... all we have to do is pick-up the long stick, the Big Brother of Arnis.



Website

Punong Guro Abner P. Anievas
Practitioner of Modified Tapado
Filipino Martial Arts Hong Kong

The Alliance of Modified Tapado and IMAFP - Its Roots

By: Antonio Ivan S. Aguirre

A Blast from The Past

DOJO KUN

1. *Jinkaku no kansei ni tsutomeru koto.*
Work to perfect your character.
2. *Makoto no michi o mamoru koto.*
Have fidelity in seeking a true way.
3. *Doryoku no seishin o yashinai koto.*
Cultivate a spirit of endeavor and perseverance.
4. *Reigi o omonjiru koto.*
Always act with good manners.
5. *Kekki no yu o imashimeru koto.*
Refrain from violent and uncontrolled behavior.

Sometime December 2001; IMAFP Senior Master (SM) Bambit Dulay and I were sharing the good old days of martial arts in Bacolod City during its golden years in the 70's. I remember reciting the above mentioned "Dojo Kun" before the start of our rigorous karate training under the tutelage of Sensei Mike Vasquez, the Chief Instructor of the All Philippine Karate Federation (APKF). We recollected our experience learning Shotokan Karate and excitedly reminisce what happened to our Sensei, Sempai and other club members. One by one, we listed the names of our martial art friends and traced their whereabouts and status. After a hearty discussion, we playfully toyed with the idea on how we can showcase to the world our rich martial arts heritage.



L-R: Tapado Master Aguirre and Grandmaster Vasquez, IMAFP Senior Master Dulay

At that time, Senior Master Dulay was reeling from the gap on the passing away (August 2001) of his revered teacher, Grandmaster Remy Presas. Senior Master Dulay candidly recalled that Grandmaster Presas shared with him for the past three years his vision of creating a strong and united Modern Arnis organization that would lift up the Filipino Martial Arts (FMA). That led into the birth of the International Modern Arnis Federation of the Philippines (IMAFP), the magnum opus of Grandmaster Presas work. Senior Master Dulay shared his joy of being one of the core organizers of IMAFP but feels the enormous challenge. The work has just begun!

Nothing impressed our mind more as a result of that free flowing meeting.

Martial Arts Destiny

On June 2002, my family transferred to Bacolod City after being away from my birthplace for more than twenty (20) years. However, I am still based in Makati City and made a monthly home visit to Bacolod. I was happy to see my old friends, colleagues and neighbors. What made my stay in Bacolod worthwhile was the recollection of my martial arts training with Sensei Vasquez. In early 2003, I visited the gym of Sensei Vasquez and was very happy to meet him after many long years. My purpose was just to say a brief hello.

I thought all the while that Sensei Vasquez had a laid back life in Bacolod City and focused himself in the world of business and never expect that he developed himself as a holistic martial artist.

I never imagined that I would be back in the mainstream of the martial arts world after Sensei Vasquez showed me a different karate technique and a new long stick fighting art known as Modified Tapado. He documented all his new ideas and techniques on the copyrighted book on Modified Tapado (published and released in late 2005) and Modified Karate (for release tentatively on June 2007).

I was mesmerized by the modifications of the Japanese and Filipino Martial Art by Sensei Vasquez, who I thought was hibernating after his successive victories in karate tournaments. Instead, here I am in front of a martial art genius who never stopped an inch in his training. He keeps on learning new techniques, philosophies and ideas in all forms

of martial arts. He is the same Sensei I knew before who never stopped learning new things.

However, he was no longer the “Taskmaster” he used to be where he rigidly imposed hard and almost brutal training. Rather, he now strictly imposed correct and scientific training. What more can I ask... Here is a goldmine of martial arts experience in the hands of a Living Legend.

Without batting an eyelash, I immediately underwent regular training in Modified Tapado and Modified Karate and learned advance techniques from Sensei himself. Furthermore, little did I know that he still has a multitude of followers in his Modified Martial Arts; more surprisingly, students with advanced techniques not seen in regular tournaments or training.

IMAFP in Full Support of Modified Tapado

I immediately contacted Senior Master Dulay on Sensei Vasquez’s Modified Tapado. He was delighted on this update. We keep the fire glowing in our vision of bringing into global limelight our hidden martial art legend; Sensei Vasquez, who at this point is a Grandmaster of Modified Tapado. We immediately lined-up national and international Filipino martial arts events where we could showcase Modified Tapado.

Looking at the unique background on the roots of the strategic alliance between IMAFP and Modified Tapado, we see no point of rivalry or competition. Rather, this is a result of a dream, a vision in bringing out to the world our talented and gifted martial artist in the person of Grandmaster Mike Vasquez. He exemplified a dedicated martial arts lifestyle, a vocation, a way of life; a credo spelled out in the Dojo Kun.

It all comes from the heart, an inspiration looking for somebody to take a lead in the Filipino martial arts world. This is the work of men in search for ideals. Nothing more can come closer to it than the world of Filipino Martial Arts. A defining moment for us who keep on pushing this goal traced all along from the lifelong work of the late Grandmaster Presas and passed on to the Filipino martial arts leaders and visionaries.

With the support of Senior Master Bambit and the IMAFP, Modified Tapado is now a part of the IMAFP’s Filipino martial arts curriculum. Grandmaster Mike has already conducted several seminars on Modified Tapado, the most memorable of which was during the First Bakkakan Festival and the 3rd World FMA Festival. His organization, Modified Tapado International, is in alliance with IMAFP.

Emergence of Modified Tapado in the International Scene: Debut in the 3rd World FMA Festival

By Rodolfo G. Vivero in collaboration with Master Henried Jose B. Lamayo and Advanced Instructor Antonio Ivan S. Aguirre



The little-known combative art called Modified Tapado was once again demonstrated in The 3rd World Filipino Martial Arts Festival in Tagaytay City, Philippines, last July 2006. The Modified Tapado exhibition drew a

crowd of curious martial artists, together with the skeptics who are common in every demo. Those who are initiated in the art of stick-fencing, saw the distinctive techniques and devastating power of Modified Tapado, to the uninitiated, on the other hand, saw it as too simple and exaggerated in its claims. But, as always, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. Skeptics cannot be blamed entirely; for it is usual that anything new can be suspect.

Modified Tapado Grandmaster Mike Vasquez together with Modified Tapado Masters (Master Henried Jose B. Lamayo, Master Dominador Villaluna Jr., Senior Instructor Jimmy Efenio and Advanced Instructor Antonio Ivan S. Aguirre) and IMAFP Officers got together during the 3rd World Filipino Martial Arts Festival held in Tagaytay City, Philippines last July 11 - 21, 2006. The event culminated at the Heritage Hotel in Makati during the Gala Night.

During the event, Modified Tapado received center stage once again as its explosiveness was exposed to the Martial Arts world. IMAFP organized and hosted the event. There were diversity of Filipino martial arts styles featured during the event; yet, it was obvious that there was cooperative effort to make the event a success. And indeed it was a success. As martial artists coming from Negros Island, it is hoped that such cooperative effort shown by the 3rd World FMA Festival organizers be emulated by the Negrosanon so that future endeavors concerning the propagation of Filipino Martial Arts would likewise be successful.

The first presentation made by Modified Tapado was during the session held in a University at Silang, Cavite, Philippines. Even as a small group, Modified Tapado masters captured the attention of university students and that of other Arnis enthusiasts as they demonstrated unique techniques and devastating power of Modified Tapado strikes at each other. Students, faculty members, and spectators came over to ask about the uniqueness of the Tapado sticks and strikes.



Russian Instructors with Sensei Mike, Tony and Leah at Mambukal

The second major presentation was in Amadeo, Cavite, where Modified Tapado Grandmaster Mike Vasquez gave a lecture and made a demonstration to participants coming from different countries such as the United States, England, Russia, Germany, Switzerland, Israel, etc. During the demonstration, the participants familiarized for themselves the fundamental strikes of Modified Tapado. In the later part of the session, each participant

took turns in delivering attacks and therefore was able to gain personal experience and insight on this little known Arnis long stick art. The participants were amazed finding out that while Modified Tapado strikes are so powerful, they can be practiced without causing injury to one's self and to his/her partner.

One major exposure of Modified Tapado was made during the coverage of GMA 7's Unang Hirit national TV program where Modified Tapado became a scene-stealer

when loud blows echoed all around the gym due to powerful strikes made by its masters. People were astounded with the fact that despite the hard blows that have been delivered, the tiled floors remained undamaged due to the perfect control of the sticks.

Another major display was during the Gala Night when Grandmaster Mike Vasquez along with the masters gave a live demonstration of the salient features of Modified Tapado techniques. Various Filipino martial arts masters and celebrities all over the country graced this historical event. At this point, Modified Tapado truly got significant media attention including its exclusive nationwide telecast feature by RPN 9, a leading Philippine TV network.



Grandmaster Vasquez
pointing out some techniques to
Dayang Edessa Ramos



Tapado training group



Grandmaster Vasquez with
Grandmaster Rene Tongson at Mambukal



Tony Aguirre with Senior Master Dieter
Knuttel at Kondutel, Bacolod



Modified Tapado Instructors with foreign delegates at Silang, Cavite
during FMA Training.

Gala Night



Grandmaster Vasquez with U.S. Delagate and Jimmy and Tony



Grandmaster Vasquez, Butch Cusi, Tony Aguirre and friends



Grandmaster Vasquez with Graciella Castillas, Linda, Henried and Butch Cusi.



Grandmaster Vasquez and Guro Abner Anievas

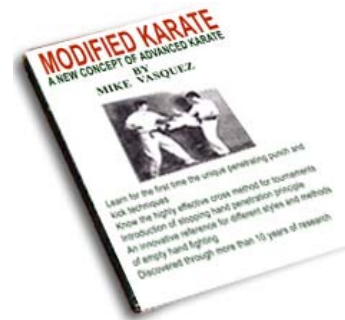
Note: Mike Vasquez authored 2 books namely, The Fundamentals of Tapado (Arnis Long Stick Art of Fighting) and Modified Karate (A New Concept of Advanced Karate). Please visit our website: www.modifiedmartialarts.com for details.

Note: The book "**Fundamentals of Tapado, Arnis Long Stick Art of Fighting**" is the first book on Tapado in the world. The author, Sensei Mike Vasquez, is licensed by its Founder, Grandmaster Romeo "Nono" Mamar, to spread Tapado all throughout the world. The book, contains the history of Tapado, its technical uniqueness to its predecessors and the fundamental skills of the art. Please note that in the end portion of the book, the primary modifications of Tapado innovated by Sensei Mike Vasquez are discussed to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the art.



Stickfighting, a major branch of Oriental martial art on weaponry, had long been kept as a secret for several centuries and is now brought out in the open. Tapado, as a core Filipino martial art on stick fighting, also remained as a secret art and is now being revealed for the first time! This is an opportunity not to be missed by any martial art student or instructor. Be the first to learn this rare art! Act now.

The Modified Karate book, set to be published next year, will certainly influence positively the martial arts world through its innovative techniques such as Cross Method of Tournament Fighting (CMTF), Defense Breaking Method (Penetrating Punch and Kick) and Stopping Hands Penetration Principle (Highest technique in Modified Karate). These techniques were tested and proven by several local and international top martial artists.



Contact: Mr. Tony Aguirre (**the only authorized contact person**) through his cell phone 63 (920) 921-6390 or through his email address: modifiedmartialarts@yahoo.com for booking on seminars or inquiries on these two books.

Friends and Fellow Practitioners

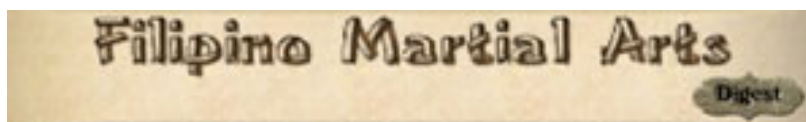




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