

Understanding Fukayakyuho – Part 1

by Felip Caudet

There are several reasons why Fukaya kyu-ho is one of the most interesting modern styles of Japanese moxibustion. Perhaps the best-known and important is the high level of efficacy of this practice. This style should be used as evidence that moxibustion can be a complete therapy on its own and then we could start recovering the ancient art of okyuya-san. This style retains many references to the traditional concepts of how to apply moxibustion but at the same time it was a refinement of the practice because Fukaya Sensei was able to make some important improvements. To get a better feel for Fukaya style it is useful to know a little about Fukaya Isaburo before he became Fukaya “Sensei.”



Fig 1 Fukaya Isaburo (1965)

Born in 1900 in Tokyo, he was restless, prolific, and possessed great intellectual capacity for reflection and study. Before the outbreak of WWII (Fukaya was in his late 30s) he had already written several books, some of which had nothing to do with moxibustion. When studying law at Nihon Daigaku Hougaku in Tokyo he fell ill with tuberculosis. Interested in the spiritual world, he looked there and to psychology for healing but had little success. He found the solution to his illness with an okyuya-san, and his recovery was an intense and powerful experience. This led him to study and later develop moxibustion.

One of the most interesting and amazing aspects of Isaburo Fukaya, and Fukayakyuho, is that he

was not molded into a moxibustionist in any particular school. He formed himself. Today, it may seem unbelievable but we must not forget that at the time, moxa was deeply entwined with Japanese society and popular culture. He built his style through reading and reviewing classic texts – some famous ones such as *Meika kyûsen* (名家灸選) (Selected texts by Moxa Masters) – and some not so famous, such as *Kôtei Meido Kyu Kei* (黄帝明堂灸経), with the observations of other practitioners and with a very extensive and thorough clinical experience.

He visited many temples (traditional moxa hot-beds) and practitioners. He saw that although the moxa being practiced was effective, it was also very painful. The cones were large, a very famous proponent of this was Kobonokyu in Asakusa (Tokyo) with cones of the size of a plum (*ume*). In order to receive the benefits of moxa, the patients had to endure very painful treatments and this problem was something that he sought to remedy.

He was inspired by classical masters such as Konzan Sensei (a curious fact is that despite living in different eras, at their death, the two teachers had exactly the same number of students and followers) and some of his concepts, such as the creation of reactive sites following the stagnation of qi and the value of moxibustion therapy, can be clearly identified in the practice of Fukaya Isaburo and his writings.

Fukaya published several books, such as *Kyu ni yoru chiryou ho* (1963), *Meikyuketsu no kennkyu* (1963), *Okyu de byouki wo naoshita hanashi* (six volumes from 1966 to 1972), *Meikakyûsen siakugi* (1973), *Kôtei Meido Kyu Kei* (1973), as well as a monthly magazine *Shinkyu Chiryô Zasshi* devoted to acupuncture and moxibustion (223 issues published from 1955 to 1964). After the death of the master, his son Hideo Shinma published eight more of his father's books about okyu. Fukaya Sensei always thought that moxibustion should be spread as it could be very beneficial to mankind, so he made great efforts to carefully record their sessions, record their findings (extra points with specific actions) and review published works about moxibustion.

Fukaya kyu-Ho Tools

A piece of history that can help us to understand Fukaya style is Fukaya Sensei's moxa box. If we study the box in detail, as preserved by his son Shinma Sensei, we can understand the essential elements of this effective style – but many secrets remain ‘out of sight’ and were only taught to advanced students. Fukaya Isaburo worked as a craftsman and hand made boxes for a period of his life. He made the moxa box to accompany him

throughout his life. He covered it with a traditional Japanese patterned fabric (Orimono, Nuno) which was glued down with rice paste.

Inside the box we can find two bamboo tubes, one long and one short, a cotton string, moxa, incense, an ash dustpan and a pencil.

Bamboo

Fukaya Isaburo developed the bamboo tool to reduce the perception of heat in a patient receiving direct moxibustion treatment. Using a common material, bamboo, he devised a long closed piece of bamboo (12x1.6cm) and one short and open (5x1.6cm). The long piece was conceived for use on the back and the short piece for limbs. His basic and first idea was that by applying this tool he can soften the sensation of moxa heat. This brings up an interesting point because there are often conflicting ideas going around. Correct timing is essential to the successful application of the bamboo tube; the tube must be applied over the moxa when the cone is 90% burned. We apply the bamboo with pressure to decrease the perception of the burn, resulting in a smooth and comfortable sensation on heat on the skin. It is of crucial importance to note that in Fukaya style we do not use the bamboo to extinguish the moxa cone as there is great therapeutic value in moxa smouldering directly on the skin. This is in contrast to other styles which want to minimize burning.

Fukaya Sensei also used the bamboo tube as a diagnostic tool. It can be used as a cup (as in cupping) to identify areas of maximum congestion, which are therefore suitable sites for treatment. Another application is to use it as a tool for pressure “massage,” to clear congestion or stasis.

Some have theorized that the tube acts to disperse defensive energy which perhaps allows the heat to penetrate more deeply, but this concept did not come from Fukaya Isaburo. Other styles of moxa use a bamboo tube, maybe inspired by Fukaya's tube, but that does not mean that those styles derived from Fukaya kyu-ho or that Fukaya kyu-ho consists of only bamboo tube moxa.

String

The string is an element that at first glance may go unnoticed but which was very important in the development of Fukaya Isaburo as a moxibustionist. The string was used to apply the jo-setsu-ho techniques which consist of using of cotton string to measure and to locate specific points for moxibustion on the patients' body. That Fukaya Sensei used these ancient techniques is another detail revealing how he loved and respected the classical traditions. The first reference that we have about this practice by Fukaya Sensei is from 1936 and

it is about four points for treating ascites. This technique would lead him to review how to locate the Dai Tsu (GV-14) point on fat people or people with retained body fluids. Fukaya Sensei found many jo-setsu-ho references in the classic Meika kyūsen. He reviewed them in his clinical practice and included them, with his comments and recommendations, in the book Meika kyūsen Syakugi.

Moxa

Another of his most interesting contributions was to use cones smaller than was common at that time, to make direct moxa more comfortable. His cones can be considered a separate, special style of cones. These cones were less large than those of the classics (with a 1-2cm diameter base) but of greater size than those used today in tōnetsukyu practice (with a 1-2mm diameter base). A regular Fukaya kyu-ho cone has a base of 2-3mm and a height of 7mm, this detail is notable because it is another of the obvious signs that the Fukaya style has many references to the traditional practice of direct moxa. This difference in cone size may seem trivial but is actually very important as it affects the following variables: temperature (amount of heat), cone burn time, ease in preparation and ignition, distance between the incense and skin.

This size of the cones is associated with the traditional belief that the secret of moxa's effect was in how it burned. Dr. Hara Shimerato was the first to publish the physiological reasons behind this idea in his work *Kyu-ho no igakuteki kenkyu* (1935).

Therapy

Fukaya Isaburo never outlined a standard protocol of his style, because it was a style that evolved and was continuously reconstructed throughout his life. Master Fukaya recorded many ideas and references about how moxa should be practiced. These and other ideas were collected and published by his best student Irie Seiji Sensei.

The master's deep knowledge of moxa can be seen in his famous decalogue published after his death by Irie Sensei.

1. *The point by itself is not effective, it is oneself doing okyu that makes it effective.* This rule defines Fukaya Sensei's whole philosophy. Study and knowledge only have value when they are applied. Confidence in the technique and experience should be added to this principle.
2. *Defined point locations are only approximations of the real point; the point is not always in the same location.* Meridian maps and point descriptions points are guides for finding the points: the exact locations must

be confirmed by palpation. The constitution and particularities of each individual and each individual disease are all factors that strongly support this rule.

3. *Points move as an adaptive response to disease progression and the patient's condition.* The movement of points responds to changes on lines of force (fascial and muscular lines) and changes in energy flow.
4. *Use famous points* as they have demonstrated their attributes time and time again and their purported actions are not just empty theory. We must consider not only the famous points from the classic illustrations and their noted specific effects, but points in such classics as *Meikakyūsen* (examples would be GV-14 for colds, TB-17 for dental pain, and *Chujōryukyu* for infertility).
5. *Use very few points.* A slogan that sums up Fukaya kyu-ho as a style could be, "use few points but many cones per point." This is perhaps one of the keys to the effectiveness of the style: to find key points that, when treated, allow the body to commence its own systematic healing response.
6. *The live points should be indurated and reactive to pressure.* These two conditions are indisputable for a point to be accepted as valid for moxibustion in Fukaya style. If a point has not such these circumstances, don't waste the time treating it with direct moxibustion.
7. *Treatments cannot just be symptomatic and local.* Treating symptomatically will not be as effective as treating the body in its global sense and after adding those symptomatic and local treatments. Mainly, in the style of Fukaya, distal or referred points in relation to the pathology are used. It allows us to integrate the totality of the body. Likewise in the Fukaya style, the thoracic area of the back is usually treated as a "root zone" where points and the organs driving and moving energy and blood are located. The release of this area is highly recommended, as in most cases it will facilitate the desired effect with the help of the distal or referral points.
8. *A famous point is not always an effective point.* It is quite possible that the point used to solve a problem is not only a described point. Due to his extensive clinical experience, Fukaya Sensei found new variations on regular points and points that were much more effective than those described for specific disorders. Those extra points are really useful. The interesting thing is to find the specific point for that patient, and at that specific time. In the words of

Fukaya Sensei: "*the famous point that works for a specific symptom can also work for other symptoms, and it can be found by chance.*" Proof of this is the additional applications that Fukaya Sensei found to such known points as LI-14, known as a point acting on the arm: he also found actions for cataracts, glaucoma, and other eye diseases.

9. *The number and size of the cones used depends on the patient's condition.* The dosage should be always adapted to the patient and their situation. References in books are for guidance, given by the person who made the written record. This rule is accompanied by a slogan: "if the patient does not feel the heat of okyu at the point, it means he needs more cones."
10. *You must develop skill in finding points.* The practice of palpation will define success in this therapy because finding the optimal point or points is essential. To be effective with Fukaya kyu-ho you must develop your palpation skills. Fukaya Sensei not only felt with the fingers, but also he observed his patients by developing his visual diagnosis (*boshin*).

After reading the decalogue it is easy to see that behind each rule there is an abundance of knowledge and clinical experience that should be reviewed if you want to go deeper in this style.

End of Part 1

References

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