

SMAA JOURNAL



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ANNOUNCEMENTS

2018 SMAA DUES

Membership fees were due on January 1, 2018. Please be sure to pay your SMAA dues on time. You can either send a check to our headquarters or pay online at <http://www.smaa-hq.com/payments.php>. We accept Visa, MasterCard, and PayPal. This is a quick and safe way to make your annual SMAA membership payment.

We appreciate our members paying dues promptly. It makes life easier for the SMAA staff of volunteers, and it is representative of the type of self-discipline we are cultivating through the study of traditional Japanese martial arts.

DONATIONS & TAX DEDUCTIONS

The SMAA is a federally tax-exempt, nonprofit corporation. As such, your donations to our association are tax deductible. Send your donations, in the form of a check or money order (made out to SMAA), to our headquarters in Michigan. We'll send you a letter back acknowledging your contribution, which you can then use for tax purposes. We hope you'll support the SMAA in our goal to preserve and promote traditional budo and koryu bujutsu.

E-MAIL

Please make sure we have your correct e-mail address. Without this address, we can't e-mail you the *SMAA Journal*.

OBJECTIVES OF THE SMAA

1. To promote and aid in the growth of Japan's traditional arts and ways.
2. To assist the public in achieving spiritual growth and physical development through budo/bujutsu.
3. To further friendship and understanding between Asian and Western martial artists.
4. To establish goodwill and harmony among martial artists of various systems.
5. To offer Western martial artists access to legitimate budo/bujutsu organizations and teachers in Japan.
6. To give practitioners of authentic budo/bujutsu recognition for their years of devotion to these arts.

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修道館武道会

Do you have a new e-mail address? Have you sent it to hedavey@aol.com? If not, we also won't be able to send you SMAA publications, so please be sure to let us know if your e-mail address changes.

SMAA PATCHES

The SMAA HQ is selling official SMAA patches for your gi. They're great looking patches that embody the spirit and honor instilled in members of our group. They won't fade or bleed when you bleach them, and yet we've been able to keep the cost down. Each patch is basically a 3 ½ inch circle featuring our logo below:



Our patches were produced using state of the art digitizing and ultra-modern technology to create an accurate and attractive embroidered emblem. They feature tight stitches, sharp detail, clean lettering, and top quality craftsmanship. There's no jagged stitching, but we've still got plenty of stitches so that the background doesn't show through.

The patch should be worn on the left side of your gi jacket near your heart. SMAA policy mandates only one patch per uniform to maintain the sense of dignity associated with traditional budo.

These new patches are a great way to show your respect and enthusiasm for our group; we hope all of our members will order at least one. *And the best part is the patches are only \$5.00 (US) each!* (E-mail shudokan@smaa-hq.com about special shipping for international orders.)

To order, go to the "Payments" section of www.smaa-hq.com or send a check or money order made out to "SMAA" to:

SMAA HQ
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FACEBOOK PAGE



Have you been to the SMAA Facebook page? If not, you're missing out on the latest SMAA news, features, videos, photos, and information. It's easy and safe to join Facebook, and all you need to do is click the "Like" button to become a follower of our Facebook page. This is the fastest way to get SMAA news and updates, and we hope you'll drop by <http://www.facebook.com/ShudokanMartialArtsAssociation> and check it out. Once you're on Facebook, we hope you'll share our page with your friends and help us promote the SMAA.

SMAA ONLINE PAYMENTS

Did you know you can pay for your annual dues at our website using PayPal or a major credit card? You can, and you can also pay for gi patches and promotions in the same way. This is a much faster, and in some ways more secure, means of sending money to our headquarters. We hope more of our members will make use of this feature. Just drop by <http://smaa-hq.com/payments.php> for more information.

THE BEST OF THE SMAA JOURNAL CD-ROM

To celebrate its 15th anniversary in 2009, the SMAA created a special CD-ROM that contained a sampling of some of the best stories and articles to appear in the *SMAA Journal* since 1994. We mailed this free of charge to everyone in the SMAA as a way of showing our appreciation to our members.

Although our anniversary has past, it's still not too late to get a copy of this CD-ROM, which is packed with hard to find information about budo and koryu bujutsu. For \$8.95, plus \$3.00 shipping and handling (\$5.00 outside the USA), we'll send you *The Best of the SMAA Journal*.

Send your check or money order to the SMAA HQ. Supplies are limited to the number of CDs remaining.

SMAA YOUTUBE CHANNEL

修道館武道会

Shudokan Martial Arts Association

Want to see some great videos of SMAA teachers, officials, and members? Now you can by visiting our YouTube channel. We're Shudokan1994, because 1994 is the year the SMAA was founded.

To see video of SMAA teachers and members, go to:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gg5NIka6Ge0&list=PLS11_XCH8Rki868tRKZ0fdJFSeFGyNZ0o

To see video of the amazing experts that trained leading SMAA officials and teachers, go to:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zcE7zBhv9Hs&list=PLS11_XCH8RkiV8liNZoXI93WI79BLe1NZ

OTSUKA YASUYUKI NEWS

At the end of September, Otsuka Yasuyuki Soke lead an autumn Meifu Shinkage Ryu training camp in Japan. Students from Japan and various countries participated. The camp took place in Sasagawa, Chiba Prefecture. It was successful despite ending early due to a rapidly approaching typhoon.

In October, Otsuka Yasuyuki Sensei traveled to Gifu Prefecture in Japan, where he gave a demonstration of Meifu Shinkage Ryu at the Hamono Matsuri Budo



Otsuka Soke

Embusai ("Hamono Festival Japanese Martial Arts Demonstration"). Meifu Shinkage Ryu is based on Katori Shinto Ryu, one of Japan's oldest forms of koryu bujutsu. Meifu Shinkage Ryu specializes in the use of shuriken (throwing stars and darts) and the fundo kusari, a weighted chain. Otsuka Soke, a published author of budo books, is one of the highest ranking martial artists in Japan and one of



Otsuka Soke throwing shuriken at the Hamono demonstration

very few people in the world teaching an authentic system of shuriken-jutsu. He is also a member of the SMAA Board of Advisors.

PAUL MARTIN NEWS



Martin Sensei

If you're interested in the Japanese samurai sword, you'll want to check out Paul Martin Sensei's latest column at www.japan-forward.com (*Sankei* newspaper) entitled *Yasugi: City of Japanese Steel and Samurai*. Just go to: <http://japan-forward.com/yasugi-city-of-japanese-steel-and-samurai/>.

Martin Sensei is a former British Museum curator, and a Hyogiin (Trustee) for the Nihonto Bunka Shinko Kyokai. He is also an appointed Bunka Meister (Master of Culture: Japanese Swords) by the Japonisme Shinko Kai (Honganji). He has trained extensively in kendo and iaido, and he's an SMAA Senior Advisor living in Japan.

Martin Sensei is also part of a remarkable documentary film called *Forgive - Don't Forget*. When Japan surrendered to the U.S. at the end of



World War II, numerous Japanese swords were confiscated and taken back to the States. The Japanese sword, while once a symbol of wartime aggression, is also deeply embedded in Japan's rich history and spiritual heritage. In order to better understand the past and build a bridge between cultures in the present, an American filmmaker attempts to return one of these surrendered swords to its original owner. At its core, *Forgive - Don't Forget* is about the connection between two very different cultures and the importance of remembrance. Learn more at <http://fdfmovie.com>.

NIPPON JUJUTSU: ORIGINS, MYTHS, AND LEGENDS

By H. E. Davey

To understand the origins of jujutsu, it is necessary to grasp its roots in Nippon, the island nation of Japan. While many Westerners have heard of jujutsu, it is often misunderstood. Among these misunderstandings are the actual roots of Nippon or Nihon jujutsu, and the idea that jujutsu in its original form is a wholly unarmed martial art. Other misconceptions have to do with what constitutes authentic techniques and the original ranking system used in most forms of ancient jujutsu.

“JUJUTSU:” A GENERIC NAME

Within the majority of classical bujutsu, “martial arts,” the study of weaponry was of primary importance, just as it is for modern-day soldiers. However, some ryu (“systems”) also included empty-handed techniques, which were married to the ryu's weapons. These forms of grappling were generically called “jujutsu.” This very general word didn't exist before the Edo era, after around 1600. The word “jujutsu” may actually stem from non-samurai, who were interested in martial arts, but who weren't often well-versed in the ins and outs of the large variety of dissimilar ryu that existed at this time. It was this sort of person that referred to significantly different grappling found in unrelated ryu as “jujutsu,” and the name stuck (especially after the dissolution of the samurai class in the late 1800s).

In former times, the various classical ryu commonly referred to their predominantly unarmed grappling methods using unique names often associated with their particular ryu, such as kumi uchi, kogusoku, koshi-no-mawari, yawara-gi, hakuda, shubaku, kempo, taijutsu, wajutsu, and torite. Just as each of the classical ryu represents distinct entities, with different characteristics, each of these names delineates a distinctive and particular form of combat. They were far from identical; all of these arts had, and in certain cases still have, their own

flavor. The generic term “jujutsu” developed to give the average civilian an easy way of speaking about various related, but still distinct, grappling systems perpetuated within the diverse classical ryu. Predating jujutsu is the word “yawara.” Ju is the Chinese reading of the character for yawara.

Over time, as Japan entered a more peaceful era, some ryu began to emphasize jujutsu to a greater extent, while new ryu, which had jujutsu as their main emphasis from the time of their inception, were also developed, in many instances by non-bushi or by bushi of lower rank. As many as 725 “jujutsu ryu” once existed. This trend increased after the end of Japan's feudal period.

Previously, grappling systems were subsidiary parts of classical ryu and were practiced mainly by bushi, Japan's feudal era warriors. However, during the Edo period, both the commoner and the bushi participated in yawara. Commoners, not being allowed to wear the bushi's long and short swords, concentrated on the more unarmed aspects of jujutsu and were more interested in arts relating to self-defense in a civil, as opposed to battlefield or castle context. While many of the koryu, “ancient ryu,” continued to be unavailable to commoners, the instructors of certain koryu offshoots provided civilians with previously unknown knowledge.

CATEGORIES OF CLASSIC JUJUTSU

In general, jujutsu during the Edo period was practiced by bushi, ashigaru (“foot soldiers”), torikata (“medieval police”), and civilians. Bushi yawara developed within the koryu, and it was used with weapons. In genuinely old systems, it considered the fact that the bushi might be wearing armor and facing a similarly clad opponent, both of whom had to be able to fall safely, as well as perform other actions while wearing two swords. The wearing of arms and armor limited how one

could grapple and fall as well as the techniques that could be used. (Try a typical forward rolling fall, as in judo, while wearing armor and dual swords on one hip.)

Striking techniques were less common (to protect the hands and feet from being injured when hitting armor), and if they did exist, were sometimes done using the butt end of weapons. Grasping the clothing was less prevalent, because when wearing armor, there wasn't much clothing to grip. Joint locking techniques needed to consider where different pieces of armor came together, and in this sense, they had something in common with cutting with a sword. So, if you visit a dojo claiming to teach a version of really ancient jujutsu, try to visualize the techniques you see in the context of two people wearing arms and armor. If you can't see how the techniques could be done under these circumstances, you might want to ask the teacher about this.

Foot soldiers were often less educated, not as well-armed or armored as the bushi, and lower-ranking. As a result, their yawara, unlike bushi yawara, was rarely designed to be used in a castle setting, made greater use of their powerful bodies (particularly their legs), and allowed a freedom of movement unavailable to the bushi.

Yawara developed by the police permitted an even greater freedom of movement, because the police did not need to be concerned with, for example, falling safely while wearing arms and armor. Their techniques emphasized non-lethal (mainly) unarmed techniques as well as arresting methods.

Yawara developed by commoners was geared toward empty-handed techniques of personal protection designed for civilian life. Most forms of jujutsu which exist today, and which are not subsections of a koryu, stem from the last two categories.

JUJUTSU IN THE WEST

Jujutsu is uniquely Japanese, as are all koryu bujutsu and budo. The old forms of jujutsu stem from martial traditions born before the ending of the samurai era in 1868. Newer forms of jujutsu, which invariably and logically must come from the pre-1868 koryu jujutsu, can still be thought of as Nippon jujutsu. There is a clear process at work here by which authentic techniques and battle-hardened principles were handed down.

You can actually compare this to classic cars, which can also have a meaningful history and lineage. The legendary Porsche brand is often thought of as an "automobile to aspire to" due to its over 70 years of racing success, positive road tests, and quality engineering. It began with the 356 model in 1948. This later evolved into the legendary 911 in 1963, a car that still exists today, and one that is highly regarded. Even in the pictures accompanying this article, you can see the 911's clear visual connection with its predecessor, the first car being designed by Dr. Ferry Porsche, and the 911 being styled by his son.

Early 356 and 911 cars are quite valuable, and Porsches have their own car shows that are well-attended. However, putting a Porsche engine into a Corvette body and chassis, then mating it with a Ford transmission, is tough to pull off. It doesn't always run well, and even if it works great, you won't



1952 Porsche 356

be able to enter such a car as a Porsche in most prestigious car shows, it won't command Porsche prices at auction, and no knowledgeable car guy (or gal) will think of it as a Porsche. If you tried to market a line of such cars as Porsches, lawyers from a certain German company would be contacting you in short order.

Even if it runs great, and even if you stick the Porsche crest on the hood, its mishmash is just too far removed from the brand identity of Porsche to be thought of as real. Nippon jujutsu also has a brand identity.

So, what doesn't qualify as authentic Japanese jujutsu is something developed outside of Japan by Westerners who never studied either ancient or newer forms of jujutsu. A mishmash of judo, karate-do, and aikido is like a kit car with miscellaneous parts that are only peripherally related to a storied brand. It may perform and handle well, but you probably shouldn't call it a Porsche or Ferrari. This sort of "jujutsu" is found in overwhelming numbers outside of Japan (and in Japan in certain cases) and outnumbers authentic jujutsu.

And this is even the case for some dojo founded in Europe or the USA by Japanese, who are using the name of an ancient form of jujutsu. Especially around the turn of the century, some Japanese took up residence in the West, and some of them really did have training in Nihon jujutsu. The problem, with a few exceptions, is that most of them heavily



1969 Porsche 911



2011 Porsche 911

modified what they taught. This isn't too different from what happens to Asian food in the West.

Some of you may have gone to Taiwan or China. If you went to a restaurant while you were there, you probably discovered the food you were served was different from the Chinese food you ate in London or Chicago, even if both were served in restaurants run by Chinese people. What you ate back in Chicago was probably an Americanized version, adjusted for American tastes. This is typically quite different from what is served in Asia, even if it goes by the same name, and even if it is prepared by a Chinese chef.

In 1926, my late father started practicing forms of jujutsu, and also Kodokan judo, in a part of the U.S. that has long had a relatively large Asian population in some of its cities. He eventually landed in Japan for several years after World War II, where he continued to study Nihon jujutsu, specifically Saigo Ryu. He later practiced aikido under Japanese teachers as well.

His instructors in the U.S. were both Japanese and American. Some of the Japanese teachers indicated they were offering instruction in venerable jujutsu systems like Kito Ryu, Tenjin Shin'yo Ryu, and others. Some simply offered "jujutsu," which tells about all you need to know about the authenticity of what they taught. Many years later, after living in Japan, my dad and I both concluded that while the



Wayne Muromoto, SMAA Jujutsu Division sixth dan, teaching in Hawaii

names of some of what he studied in the U.S. were associated with bona fide koryu jujutsu, the techniques were so altered from the original remaining kata in Japan that he might as well have studied another martial art. Fortunately, this wasn't true for everything he practiced.

Even more fortunate is the fact that several authentic forms of ancient and modern Nihon jujutsu can be found in the SMAA Jujutsu Division. We just might have the widest variety of bona fide jujutsu ryu outside of Japan of any martial arts group I've encountered.

We're privileged to be in the SMAA global partnership of Japanese and Western martial arts experts, who represent a vast variety of contemporary and early martial arts. A large spectrum of disciplines are practiced by SMAA leaders, far more than is obvious from looking at the divisions currently active in our group.

JUJUTSU FOR SELF-DEFENSE

"If you really want to learn about street self-defense, you should study some kind of koryu bujutsu, like

jujutsu." I've read this quite a few times on the Internet, and it draws some erroneous conclusions about koryu bujutsu, which in turn makes one's understanding of at least the ancient forms of jujutsu suspect.

The implication is that as opposed to the classical and modern forms of budo, the ancient forms of bujutsu, as practiced by the hoary bushi, somehow provide people with a system of devastating street-fighting. This assumption, which influences what one expects to see when encountering authentic koryu jujutsu, is based on a fundamental misunderstanding of the differences between classical bujutsu and budo, modern bujutsu and budo, and goshin-jutsu ("self-defense"). It incorrectly supposes that modern budo (judo, karate-do, etc.) is completely ineffective for civil self-protection, and that koryu bujutsu is entirely efficient in this regard.

Actually, although both combative forms can be used as means of personal protection with sometimes great effectiveness, neither budo or koryu bujutsu is designed exclusively for "self-defense." Classical bujutsu is effective, without modification, only in a feudal Japanese battlefield or castle context. It was an art designed for the ancient Japanese military. Likewise, modern bujutsu is designed for the current military or police, and thus will emphasize the use of weapons, such as machine guns and hand grenades, which the average civilian will not, one would hope, be carrying on the street. The operative word here is, "martial," which, strictly speaking, connotes a military usage.

Civilian systems of combat are ultimately directed to self-defense. A bar fight, a mugging, an attempted rape, a drunk shoving match, these are unfortunately not wholly unknown in any civil society. Thus, a civilian art of self-defense is directed to protection of the self. It's personal. Yet, all of the koryu bujutsu, including koryu jujutsu, is focused on the protection of the group, be it one's clan or one's nation. You don't join today's Army to

learn self-defense, and Army training is not primarily concerned with what amount to one-on-one duels. The same could have been said about the samurai and their military training.

Therefore, most of the "martial arts" found today are not, technically speaking, martial at all, in that they are not, were not, and/or cannot be used by a given group in a military context. In Japan, the actual study of civilian self-protection is termed goshinjutsu, and it is not widely emphasized, as Japan is a fairly peaceful society. Individuals in the West who are interested in learning self-protection exclusively would be advised to seek out an actual self-defense or anti-rape course.

The drawback of such courses is that they rarely involve an ongoing program of instruction, which is vital for maintaining readiness, and they often include little mental training to allow students to be psychologically equipped to deal with an actual emergency. In contrast, traditional Asian combative methods, whether modern budo or koryu bujutsu, while not providing immediate gratification in terms of modern civil self-protection, offer ongoing mental and physical cultivation, which can result in effective skills of individual self-defense, as by-products of extended training.

In short, modern budo is not inevitably less effective than koryu bujutsu for self-defense, but it would not be applicable in an ancient Japanese battlefield context. Neither modern budo or koryu bujutsu, including jujutsu, have civilian self-defense as their sole or primary objective, but depending on the martial art and the ryu, they can be useful for self-defense.

JUJUTSU RANK

"I have a black belt in jujutsu." Sometimes people call our dojo and tell me this. I often ask, "Which ryu?" This is just as often followed by baffled silence.

Jujutsu, as has been noted, is more or less a generic term used to conveniently describe a variety of often dissimilar minimally armed Japanese arts. Aside from the fact that classical forms of jujutsu do not always give modern black belt degrees (dan), to say that one has a rank in simply jujutsu is like saying that a person has a black belt in "predominantly unarmed combat." The word "jujutsu" is actually that non-specific.

Imagine meeting someone who states that he has a master's degree in science. When asked what branch of science he majored in, he states again that his degree is in "science." Just as no reputable university will give an advanced degree in such a broad subject, no legitimate instructor will claim a degree in simply "jujutsu."

On the other hand, it is true that some large, multi-disciplinary koryu bujutsu/budo umbrella organizations in Japan issue certificates indicating that one's ranking is in "jujutsu" without specifying the exact ryu on the certificate. This is usually because a board of senior-ranking examiners from many different arts (not just one ryu of jujutsu) has approved the rank, and the group's jujutsu division may include several forms of jujutsu. Still, even in this case, the individual is graded upon their knowledge of a specific, recognized ryu. For organizational reasons, however, this is not always indicated on the diplomas issued by such groups, and the SMAA falls into this category.

While the leaders of our group have high ranks in recognized ryu, or "martial systems," each rank we issue comes from the SMAA division devoted to that martial art. It is a ranking within that division and within our group.

For example, while our jujutsu division has a member with high rank in Takeuchi Ryu, we cannot offer you ranking in this ryu. Only the current headmaster of Takeuchi Ryu jujutsu can legitimately offer such certification. In the case of the ancient martial arts, it is especially important to note this

fact. Be skeptical of any martial arts group that indicates something different.

We can, nevertheless, offer members of our jujutsu division ranking within this division, meaning that based on your years of dedication to Takeuchi Ryu, technical proficiency in this ryu, and historical and philosophical knowledge of this ryu, we can give you ranking within the SMAA.

Your certificate would indicate that you had received a "godan in the SMAA Jujutsu Division," while not mentioning a specific ryu. Such ranking is not easily earned and is of great value. This is the most any association that is legitimate can do.

In Japan, multi-discipline associations are only offering ranking and teaching certification from, and within, their group. They cannot, and will not, grant rank in a specific ryu as only the current head of each ryu has the authority to issue such certification.

The subject of dan, so-called "black belts," is also often not well-understood nor is the history of the kyu/dan system. People who have obtained black belts are called yudansha, "person with dan." Holders of kyu, a lower class rank, are mudansha, "people without dan."

Today's belt system is the product of the commoner class in Japan, not the warrior class. It was created by Kano Jigoro Sensei, the founder of judo, after the abolition of the samurai caste in the late 1800s. Kano Sensei was a commoner, a well-heeled commoner, whose family owned a sake mill, and prior to the ending of the samurai, his family belonged to the merchant caste, the lowest social class. Contrastingly, koryu bujutsu evolved among the bushi, a different societal class, and therefore, trying to rationalize the kyu/dan system with ancient martial arts in Japan is flawed on the basis of history.

Until recently, relatively speaking, you could recognize a modern martial art by the fact that it issued dan and kyu grades. Koryu bujutsu, including koryu jujutsu, originally did not use the belt system, instead they offered menkyo, which are often teaching licenses, and this approach usually has fewer levels. Generally, three to five levels of menkyo are available, compared to the modern kyu/dan system with as many as ten kyu and ten dan.

People accustomed to the plethora of colored belts offered in modern budo are sometimes mystified by this limited number of ranks, wondering how quality control can be maintained and teachers certified. It's actually easy.

How many "ranks" are issued at most universities? Ten? Well, no, actually just three. Harvard and Yale seem to get along pretty well with a measly bachelor's degree, master's degree, and PhD. Originally, koryu jujutsu wasn't much different.

That said, history and trends have their own momentum; the kyu/dan system is ubiquitous these days. In recent years, Daito Ryu, Hakko Ryu, Hontai Yoshin Ryu, and other forms of bona fide Nihon jujutsu have started to issue kyu and dan. Hakko Ryu, actually, issues kyu and dan up to a certain level, and then switches to something approximating the menkyo system. Takeda Sokaku Sensei, for all intents and purposes the "founder" of Daito Ryu in the modern era, didn't use dan. His successor and son, Takeda Tokimune Sensei, started using the kyu/dan system despite this.

And in groups like the SMAA, having two systems for ranking and certifying instructors isn't practical; the kyu/dan system makes the most sense for us, as it is most well known. Plus, with several martial arts under one banner, and several styles of each martial art, we needed a common approach. Other multi-discipline groups in Japan came to a similar conclusion.

Still, the martial tradition I'm associated with has never used a system of ten dan, and we still only receive a limited number of menkyo. But my students are free to apply for dan from the SMAA, and I'm grateful for my own SMAA eighth dan. So, perhaps how rank is issued in koryu jujutsu is changing, and this is definitely the case for newer systems of jujutsu. But what is universal is the idea that there is no such thing as "jujutsu." Ryu exist, and some of them focus on jujutsu, and skill is found (and evaluated) within these Japanese martial traditions. They all have unique histories and specific names.

RECOGNIZING NIPPON JUJUTSU

"I'm certain my teacher is showing us real Japanese-style jujutsu. Some of his movements are identical to the ones I've seen in samurai movies from Japan."

I've heard this before as well. So have Steve Fabian Sensei, Ohsaki Jun Sensei, Wayne Muromoto Sensei, and a bunch other longtime Nippon jujutsu teachers in the SMAA. Speaking for myself, I'm sympathetic to anyone's desire to have faith in their sensei, but this kind of statement reveals a huge lack of knowledge concerning Japanese martial arts in general.

Samurai movies are not usually written and produced by martial arts experts. Their goal isn't educational, but aimed at entertainment, and real koryu bujutsu is often deceptively simple. It doesn't necessarily look good on film. Those aren't real swords in *Seven Samurai*, and while sometimes real martial artists are consulted in moviemaking, their goal is still to entertain more than recreate.

In recent years, on the other hand, more forms of true jujutsu are appearing on video in Japan. Over 30 years ago, I used to have to hop on a plane, go to the Kanda section of Tokyo, and then hunt for Maruzen, Kinokuniya, or some other bookstore, to find such videotapes. And then only a very limited selection could be found. Now, I can buy such films

on the Internet with the click of a mouse. Some these DVDs, often in violation of copyright, are appearing on YouTube as well. If someone wants to learn Kiraku Ryu jujutsu from a video (for instance), they can try. They can also claim to be an expert and teach this to others.

They just can't do it very well.

But their students can look at the Kiraku Ryu DVD and recognize techniques that, at least superficially, look the same. Buyers beware, and bear in mind that few legitimate jujutsu sensei in Japan will put all of their kata on video. You should be getting more than what is on the video, and your sensei should be able to offer more proof than skills that generally resemble a video. Membership and certification from a group like the SMAA or another association with Japanese teachers among its membership is typical of real Nippon jujutsu teachers. Be leery of people that don't have this certification.

You should be able to join your sensei's group as well. Most jujutsu groups in Japan, which certify people to teach in and outside of Japan, will also certify their "grandstudents" and offer them membership in the ryu or association. Being part of a group is a central part of Japanese culture. If you can't in some way, and at some rank, be directly associated with your sensei's jujutsu ryu, certification organization, or association, be skeptical. You'll also usually get some proof of rank and/or association directly from the headquarters.

In addition, it is not uncommon for koryu bujutsu and modern budo to bear little resemblance to what we might imagine them to look like. When discussing jujutsu, it is not always possible to trust even the descriptions of native Japanese teachers of other combative disciplines. For instance, one of my students was born in Japan. He first came to our dojo because he "had always wanted to see some form of jujutsu." This person had over twenty years of experience in judo, and had lived in Tokyo for much of his life . . . but he had never seen jujutsu.

Jujutsu just isn't widely practiced in Japan, nor are most martial arts without a sport element. (Aikido is a more recent exception to this rule.)

For this reason, what one sometimes hears from teachers of other Japanese martial arts is frequently based on what they *think* jujutsu looks like, or what they have heard others say about it. To be blunt, learn about Nippon jujutsu from jujutsu teachers; don't automatically trust what teachers of other martial arts have to say about it or what they write. They may be right, they may be misinformed, and they may have their own ax to grind. Going to the source is best.

Explaining how to recognize authentic Nihon jujutsu, beyond asking for proof of certification from bona fide groups, is a huge subject. Fabian Sensei, a Director for the SMAA Jujutsu Division, did a fine job of addressing this for our journal. You can find his article on our website: <http://smaa-hq.com/articles.php?articleid=10>.

Are you researching jujutsu in general, a specific ryu, or a particular dojo? You can send your questions to leaders in the SMAA Jujutsu Division. We'll be happy to help. Just send e-mail to

shudokan@smaa-hq.com, and your mail will be forwarded to some of the top jujutsu authorities in the world.

While reading is a good start, direct experience is even better. Fabian Sensei, Nicklaus Suino Sensei, and other top teachers of Nihon jujutsu have presented this art form at past SMAA events. I've taught jujutsu at SMAA Seminars a few times, too. If you really want to get a feel for Japanese jujutsu, come to an SMAA event that includes this art. These seminars are big fun. I can't recall hearing a single argument, which even I find hard to believe. But it's true, and I can almost guarantee you'll have a good time and learn something new. We won't usually teach you all our kata, unless you join the ryu of the teacher being featured, but you can see, feel, and try authentic jujutsu—Japan's oldest martial art.

About the Author: H. E. Davey started studying Nippon jujutsu at five years of age, and he's practiced more than one style of jujutsu in Japan and the USA. He is the Director of the Sennin Foundation Center for Japanese Cultural Arts, which was established in 1981. A Director for the SMAA Jujutsu Division, he has received a Shihan certificate and eighth dan from the SMAA.

THOUGHTS ON MINDFULNESS AND MEDITATION

By Stephen Fabian

"Mindfulness" is currently a popular notion by which counselors and therapists seem to mean to keep your consciousness here and now. Keeping your consciousness here and now has the advantage of not allowing your thoughts to wander to the many "what ifs" in life, the desires for extra material items or relationships you might want, or the regrets over past actions or missed opportunities. Not that one shouldn't plan for the future or learn from the past, but to dwell on or obsess over either not only robs us of experiencing the richness and totality of every moment of *now*, but also can lead to dangerous and

damaging neuroses and psychoses. The best way of keeping your consciousness in the moment is by focusing on and fully experiencing each act as it occurs. While it probably requires the enlightened mind of a Buddhist saint or bodhisattva to successfully accomplish unending mindfulness, even moments of it now and then will help us to lead more productive, enriched, and fulfilling lives. And what better practical way to train mindfulness than through training in martial arts like jujutsu, iaijutsu, and bojutsu? Whether it be through attentively cultivating the nuances of unarmed defense, or



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through the manipulation of potentially deadly weapons with lethal aim and force, the only way to fully develop one's martial ability is to train mindfully, purposefully, in each technique and kata. Doing so not only deepens and accelerates your development as a martial artist, it also enhances your focus (mental and physical) as well as your quality of life through active application and training of mindfulness and the concomitant quieting of distracting thoughts, attachments, and desires.

Meditation is another way to achieve mindfulness, but is also a means to cultivating one's inner being to the ultimate potential of mindfulness: a total freeing of the self from the bonds of desires and negative thoughts and feelings leading to clarity of perception and comprehension (or enlightenment, in its Eastern guise). There are many practiced versions of meditation and many resources available on how to meditate, and ultimately you should find the best method for yourself, some way that is comfortable and satisfying enough to keep you coming back to it, day after day. While meditation can be practiced anywhere, anytime, practically

speaking and particularly for beginners new to its challenges, there are some basics to arrange for a more successful effort.

Broadly speaking, you should be neither too full nor too hungry, neither too energized nor too sleepy, and in a quiet space without too many overt sensory distractions. Structurally, you should maintain a posture that allows for the natural curvature of your spine, neither too rigidly straight nor too relaxed in a slumped over heap. (Not as easy as it sounds: the classic "full lotus" position sitting cross-legged with feet atop opposite thighs is far from achievable for most of us, and even simply sitting cross-legged for those not used to it or whose joints have stiffened will result in poor posture unless a cushion is used to lift the hips several inches. Traditional Japanese seiza, or sitting with knees bent and hips resting on the soles of the feet with your shins and insteps on the floor, can produce a perfect tilt for spinal alignment, but the position can be torture on the knees and ankles of those not used to it. As a comfortable beginning, try simply sitting on the edge of a hard chair with your feet either flat on the ground or tucked slightly beneath the chair.)

Once you achieve a comfortable and aligned posture, you should focus on taking smooth breaths, in and out. You might simply focus on or be mindful of the breaths as you inhale and exhale, or you might count the breaths consecutively, or in batches of ten—the point being to try not to think beyond the awareness of your breathing, so that you can stop the incessant monologue going on in your brain that connects you to your past and future, your regrets and desires, your triumphs and your fears. Of course, trying not to think is probably the easiest way to prod more thinking, so the effort should be minimal—when your mind wanders from focusing on your breathing, and it will, simply nudge it back. Over and over.

There are many other meditation styles and practices, including specific methods of breathing,

hand positions, mental foci, etc. And the breath control mindfulness of meditation can be practiced while engaging in activities other than sitting still, such as while walking or riding a bike, gardening or house cleaning, or practicing yoga or other Eastern systems of movement. Ultimately, the challenge is to get started, and for that the simpler the better. Try it for yourself, maybe just a couple of minutes tonight before going to sleep or tomorrow morning after waking up. But give it a chance. You'll have good sessions and not so good sessions, but the benefits of meditation are many and will compound and build on each other (just Google "benefits of meditation" for numbers of legitimate and informative sites).

About the Author: Stephen Fabian Sensei has been involved in Asian martial arts for most of his life. He lives in New Jersey and trains in Hontai Yoshin Ryu, which specializes in jujutsu and classical weaponry. He resided for several years in Japan and is a disciple of the 18th generation Headmaster of Hontai Yoshin Ryu. Fabian Sensei is believed to be the first American ever licensed to teach this ancient martial system. Dr. Fabian also studied Toyama Ryu iaido in Japan. In 1989, he became the Toyama Ryu iaido All-Japan Champion in the Men's Shodan/Nidan Division. Fabian Sensei is a Division Director in the SMAA Jujutsu Division. His current SMAA title/rank is jujutsu Shihan/seventh dan, and he has a fourth dan in the SMAA iaido Division.

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