

Classical Judo, Kodokan Judo, or judo as it was prior to WW II, was a martial art. Since Judo today is about competing in tournaments, katas are rarely learned and self-defense techniques such as the series pictured above, have no place. Yet, katas and self-defense techniques are given equal status under USCJS. But where did all of this start? Here is an abbreviated history of Judo:

Judo was derived from Ju Jutsu. Thus, in order to understand the development of Judo, it is necessary to understand the history of Ju Jutsu, and *bugei*, or martial arts. However, Ju Jutsu is a generic term applied to numerous systems of combat that are not all similar in appearance or technique. Other names included:

Yawara Hakuda	Taijutsu	Wajutsu	Torite	Kogusoku	Kempo
Kumiuchi	Shubaku	Koshinomawari.			

Ju Jutsu had 725 officially documented systems, or *Ryu or Ryu-ha*. A Ryu was the traditional family organizational grouping of the bugei; A Ryu-ha was a non-bloodline system. The differences between these systems were generally attributable to specialization in certain techniques. However, many of the systems were so identical that it was virtually impossible to distinguish them from other systems. It was not unusual for a student, upon receiving his teaching license, to open his own system. The student could continue using the name of the Ryu or Ryu-ha for which he was licensed or, he could give his system a new name for his own publicity. In addition, the more schools under a Ryu or Ryu-ha, the more chances for fractionation.

There were only 20 registered Ju Jutsu Ryu in the days prior to the founding of Kodokan Judo. This was a result of the Meiji Restoration in 1868 in which the Tokugawa Shogunate crumbled and power was restored to the Emperor. As a result, Japan began assimilating the ways of Europe and the United States, at the expense of its own culture. Consequently, the proponents of Bu Jutsu, the *bushi* (The term samurai is often applied to bushi. However, samurai is a name for a type of bushi from the Muromachi period (1392-1573) onward.), the Japanese feudal warrior, no longer had a role in the emerging modern Japan.

Japan had isolated itself for over 200 years prior to Admiral Perry of the United States forcing Japan to open its country to foreigners. Since 1636, Japanese subjects were

expressly forbidden by law to leave the country or, once having left, never to return. The penalty was death. Thus, Japan was a backwards country in terms of weapons. The primary weapons used by the bushi were bows and arrows, and in close combat, swords and spears. The bushi specialized in these weapons and learned Ju Jutsu as a secondary system.

Whether it was the common class who had to develop its own method of self-defense, or the bushi, both contributed to the over all development of Ju Jutsu. Furthermore, a systemized form began taking place in the latter half of the 16th century. This is substantiated from historical and literary works in general and from the various *Densho*, the manuscript instruction and records of secrets by the founders of various schools.

Ieyasu became the Sei Taishogun of Japan in 1605. His clan, Tokugawa, and its military dictatorship consolidated power and ruled Japan for 267 years until political power was restored to the Emperor in 1868. The Tokugawa divided Japan into provinces and districts and ruled the country from the central government established by Ieyasu in Edo (later to become Tokyo). The government was called *Bakufu*, a denomination that was the ancient name for the generalissimo's headquarters or tent on the battlefield during the Kamakura period. The Shogun, or head of the Tokugawa clan, resided in a mighty castle while the Emperor and his court nobles were forced to live in virtual seclusion in Kyoto in a substantially less significant dwelling.

During the rule of the Tokugawa clan, the military class formed an army of over 400,000 families. The military soldiers were known as men of war (*bushi*), or more commonly, as retainers (*monofu, wasarau*). However, the term *samurai*, from the Chinese meaning *vassal*, was the name generally applied to all warriors who were permitted to wear the long and short swords (*daisho*) in the service of a lord

The Japanese art of combat involved a variety of forms, methods and weapons, each having a particular specialization of that art. Each specialization was known as *Jutsu*, a word that may be translated as "method", "art" or "technique. The entire body of these Jutsus, or specializations of the Japanese art of combat is most often termed *Bu Jutsu*. Bu means "military" or "martial." Bu Jutsu is defined as "military technique", "art" or "method."

Learning Bu Jutsu took place in the *ryu*. A ryu represented a system wherein a publicly acknowledged expert taught students. Ryus were found everywhere. Each military clan included centers of specialized martial instruction within the territory under its jurisdiction. Instruction took place in a *dojo*, the training hall of the martial ryu. The name was borrowed from the Buddhist nomenclature for the halls set aside for meditation and other spiritual exercises in virtually every monastery and convent.

Resident students were generally known as apprentices (*Uchi Desi*). Other students attended classes and then returned to their homes. Generally, students of these early Japanese ryu were first licensed as *Shoden*. Their rankings then progressed through *Chuden*, *Okuden/Moruroku*, *Menkyo* and ultimately, *Menkyo Kaiden*. *Menkyo Kaiden* literally means “license of total transmission.”

The independent development of unarmed methods of Bu Jutsu probably came about because of the long period of peace and the many legislative and police controls strictly enforced by the central authorities in Edo. This had a subtle weakening effect on the traditional armed specializations of Bu Jutsu, which during the period could be used only in occasional individual and clandestine confrontations of an exceptional nature. Unarmed methods of combat filled the void. But, it is unlikely that they did not include weapons because weapons of any sort, whether legally carried and used by the warrior or camouflaged for use by members of other classes of Japanese society, were the norm, not the exception. Furthermore, those methods of unarmed combat that survived clearly have techniques inspired by the use of swords, spears, sticks, parries and whirling blades of various kinds.

Ju Jutsu literally means the art of suppleness, flexibility, pliancy, or gentleness. The principle of Ju is the adaptation of flexibility to the maneuvers of an opponent in order to use his maneuvers, and the forces behind them, to subjugate the opponent or neutralize the opponent’s attack.

The term Ju Jutsu came into existence long after the forms it described were originated. Ju Jutsu stressed unarmed techniques but also dealt with small weapons techniques. Thus, Ju Jutsu can be defined as various armed or unarmed fighting systems that can be applied against armed or unarmed enemies. Classical, or combat, Ju Jutsu, included methods of kicking, striking, kneeling, throwing, choking, joint-locking, use of certain weapons and holding and tying an enemy. Most systems only emphasized one or two of these methods.

The Takenouchi Ryu, founded by Hisamori Takenouchi, is considered the turning point from which various systems clearly came to be identified. He established his Ryu in 1532. Thus, when classifying the various Ryu as Ju Jutsu, the Takenouchi Ryu became the catalyst.

Ju Jutsu is the only bugei that does not take its name from the weapons it uses or from its form but from its essential principle. Generally, Ju Jutsu was not a major offensive tactic, for there were more substantial and effective methods of offense within the bugei arsenal.

Classical Judo, the Judo founded by Jigoro Kano, established itself as the most sophisticated and practically effective method of combat inspired by the principle of Ju.

It's excellence in both theory and practice in the field of unarmed combat was rewarded in 1905 when the majority of the old ryus of Ju Jutsu merged with Kodokan Judo.

Ju Jutsu thrived from the late 17th century to the mid 19th century, when power was restored to the Emperor and the services of the bushi were no longer needed. The ordinance prohibiting the bushi from wearing swords had a profound effect on the swift decline of all martial arts in Japan. Many schools went out of business or bordered on the brink of ruin.

The collapse of the feudal age led the way for the conversion of bugei "martial arts" to budo "martial ways." The bugei were developed by the warrior as fighting arts designed to protect the group cause. The bugei were directly concerned with a broad spectrum of weapons. Budo does not have the combat function of the bugei, tended to be specialized, their effectiveness being confined to a particular weapon or type of combat. The budo are concerned with spiritual discipline through which the individual elevates himself mentally and physically in search of self-perfection. Budo are less combatively oriented and lack the practical element inherent in the bugei: the principle, rather than the resultant technique is emphasized, and in some cases they have deviated so far from the bugei forms from which they sprung, that they have lost all utility in practical combat.

Judo's path to invention began in 1875 when Baisei Nakai, a former member of the Shogun's guards, happened to mention in passing that Ju Jutsu was an excellent form of physical training while on one of his many visits to Jirosaku Kano's household. He gave 15-year-old Jigoro Kano a brief demonstration and stated that Ju Jutsu could enable someone with little physical strength to overcome a bigger, more powerful adversary. Jigoro Kano resolved then and there to ask Nakai-san to teach him Ju Jutsu because Jigoro was repeatedly beaten and bullied by bigger boys most of his life.

Nakai-san could not understand how such a promising young man would be interested in an outdated discipline of bygone days of the Samurai. Nakai-san explained to Jigoro Kano that the study of Ju Jutsu would be a waste of time. However, given the seriousness of the situation, Jigoro Kano needed to study Ju Jutsu in order to develop his body and learn how to defend himself. He remembered two individuals who knew Ju Jutsu, Ryuji Katagiri, the gatekeeper of his father's house, and Genshiro Imai. But both men tried to convince Jigoro Kano that Ju Jutsu was hopefully out of date.

Finally, Jigoro Kano went to his father to ask his assistance in finding a Ju Jutsu instructor because the bullying he experienced became unbearable. However, in order to save face, Jigoro Kano could not tell his father the real reason he wanted to learn Ju Jutsu. He simply told his father he heard that Ju Jutsu enabled a smaller man to defeat a bigger man. Jirosaku Kano suggested Baisei Nakai but Jigoro explained that Nakai-san turned

him down and so did Katagiri-san and Imai-san. Unfortunately, Jirosaku turned down his son's request and instead, suggested a modern sport.

Jigoro Kano enrolled as a student of literature in the prestigious Tokyo Imperial University in 1877 at the age of 17. It was around this time he started seeking out Osteopaths. Many Ju Jutsu masters became adept at setting bones that led them to the practice of Osteopathy. Eventually, Jigoro Kano found Teinosuke Yagi. Yagi-san trained under Master Isomata Emon of the Tenjin Shinyo Ryu and received his license to teach. However, Yagi-san explained that he no longer instructed Ju Jutsu but did write a letter of introduction for Jigoro Kano to Hachinosuke Fukuda, an Osteopath and licensed teacher of Tenjin Shinyo Ryu.

Hachinosuke Fukuda had a ten-mat tatami room where Jigoro was to receive his first formal training in Ju Jutsu. Fukuda-san was a disciple of Mataemon Iso, the founder of the Ryu. Hachinosuke Fukuda was 50 years old and was better at the techniques than at formal exercises (kata).

Tenjin Shinyo Ryu was devoid of any martial aim in the Meiji era but it was a very effective method of self-defense. Tenjin Shinyo Ryu specialized in *Ate Waza*, or striking techniques, and *Katame Waza*, or grappling techniques. Tenjin Shinyo Ryu was based on a combination of Yoshin Ryu and Shinno Shindo Ryu.

Jigoro Kano's father was not pleased that Jigoro went behind his father's back. However, he realized the intensity of Jigoro's desire to learn Ju Jutsu. Jirosaku Kano gave his permission but with one condition: Jigoro had to promise his father that he would learn Ju Jutsu well.

There was no systematic, cumulative training regimen for Ju Jutsu. Beginning students were expected to immediately begin practicing the techniques that advanced students were performing. In addition, students of Ju Jutsu trained in full-sleeve jackets and loose fitting trousers but later, shorter-sleeved jackets and knee length trousers were introduced. The uniform offered no protection to the lower legs and elbows. Furthermore, Fukuda-san believed in teaching primarily by experience, rather than explanation. Thus, Fukuda-san would repeatedly throw his students (at that time he had seven regular students, two of whom were advanced) until they understood how a technique worked.

Hachinosuke Fukuda's widow asked Jigoro Kano to take over the dojo and after much persuasion, Jigoro Kano agreed and became master of the dojo. However, Jigoro Kano realized that he still did not possess the requisite knowledge and skills to be a teacher. Thus, he transferred to Masatomo Iso. Masatomo Iso was 60 years old and excelled in the formal exercises and was a renown expert in *Atemi Waza*

Jigoro Kano was one of three assistants for the 30 regular students who practiced under Master Iso but Jigoro Kano was often on his own to lead the class in kata and doing randori with every student. That was the style in Ju Jutsu. The assistants or Master were expected to randori with every student during each class. Nevertheless, this demanding regimen greatly improved Jigoro Kano's knowledge, skill and ability.

Master Iso passed away in June 1881 causing Jigoro Kano to join an entirely different Ryu. Jigoro Kano had played baseball with Masahisa Motoyama while a student at Tokyo University. Masahisa's father, Masaaki, was a well-respected master of Kito Ryu Ju Jutsu. However, Masaaki was old and after much persistence by Jigoro Kano, Masaaki gave Jigoro a letter of introduction to Tsunetoshi Iikubo. Thus, in 1881 Jigoro Kano joined the Kito Ryu under Iikubo Tsunetoshi. The Kito Ryu emphasized *Nage Waza*, or throwing techniques and the Nage Waza was superior to the Nage Waza of Tenjin Shinyo Ryu. That is a very important point to remember. There are many who think that just because Tenjin Shinyo Ryu specialized in Katame Waza and Ate Waza that it did not have throwing techniques. Many of the Ju Jutsu ryus had Nage Waza but not to the specialization of the Kito Ryu.

Iikubo Tsunetoshi promoted Jigoro Kano to assistant instructor and allowed Jigoro Kano to instruct 20 to 30 students. However, Jigoro Kano had an appetite for learning and was very diligent in visiting other masters of Ju Jutsu and studying the old Densho. In particular, Jigoro Kano made an academic study of Sekiguchi Ryu and Seigo Ryu. Finally, at the age of 23, a graduate of Tokyo Imperial University and a faculty member of the Gakushuin, the Peer's School, Kano established his own school in February 1882 by taking some of the students he privately taught at Iikubo Tsuneto's training hall to a Buddhist temple known as Eishoji in Shitayakita Inaricho, Tokyo.

What Jigoro Kano taught in the Eishoji Buddhist Temple had yet to be called Judo. It wasn't until Jigoro had built the dojo on the vacant lot next to the Eishoji Buddhist Temple that Jigoro Kano called his system Judo. Judo was still evolving. For example, Jigoro Kano's Kito Ryu instructor, Iikubo Tsunetoshi, still came to the Kodokan several days a week to teach Kito Ryu Ju Jutsu. It was during this time frame that Jigoro Kano came upon the concept of *kuzushi*, off-balance. Despite the 725 Ju Jutsu ryus that were known to exist in Japan, not one ryu ever conceived the idea of *kuzushi* when applying techniques. This was an amazing discovery by Jigoro Kano that deserves as much recognition as his invention of Judo.