

Making Way: War, Philosophy and Sport in Japanese *Judo*

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In the midst of the battle, the two figures meet. Stained with mud and blood, they cast off their broken swords and collide in a last, desperate effort at survival. Their armored limbs clash violently and snake around each other to get a tight grip. There is a pause, and before he can think, one of the warriors feels the tearing burn of his enemy's dagger under his chest guard. With a yell the larger one hurls the other to the ground with a dull thud. The fallen warrior's eyes quiver shut as his foe rushes on . . .

The crowd is a dazzling nova of flashbulbs. With their once-clean white uniforms hanging limply about their sweaty bodies, the contestants show clear signs of tiring. The clock ticks past 10 minutes, but it is no time to be faint of heart, for both had scored half points and the championship is on the line. Back and forth they feint until—an opening! In a flash, the match is over with a clean reverse hip throw. Quickly, they bow and leave the mat—one to enjoy a riotous victory party, the other to nurse wounded pride and plan for the next encounter. . . .

These two vignettes may seem as far apart as they can get. Though they both depict the melee of two people, each involves substantially different approaches to the same basic techniques. Within less than a century, *jūdō*¹ has gone from being identified with the first of the above pictures in the nineteenth century to being married to the second by the mid-twentieth century.

One might rightly question the importance of studying *jūdō* in a sociological context. Martial arts in general are often ignored as unimportant cultural phenomena and they are usually relegated by mainstream researchers to the position of curious esoterica. As William Paul puts it:

. . . in the larger academic community there seems to be an apparent tendency among some scholars to dismiss Bu Jutsu [martial

1. *Jūdō* (lit. "the Way of pliancy") is a difficult term to define, and the following discussion of its development is the best definition I can offer. Suffice it to say, it is a native Japanese fighting form that incorporates primarily throws, pins, joint techniques, and sometimes strikes.

arts] as a curious antiquity which has had a vague and unsavory relationship to organized violence.²

Thus, there is an unfortunate dearth of good scholarship in the field of martial arts. Even so, it may seem that *jûdô* garners far more attention than it deserves. For Japan is a modern society, and the number of Japanese *jûdô* practitioners who are members of an *jûdô* organization is less than for baseball, volleyball, basketball, and even ping-pong.³ Nevertheless, we cannot be too hasty in dismissing the examination of this cultural phenomenon.

Not only is *jûdô* especially conspicuous in Japan, it is also the only Japanese sport to be practiced internationally on any appreciable scale.⁴ In the last century, it has metamorphosed from a relatively small-scale, rather esoteric “martial art” to a large-scale, modern, Westernized, and international sport. The rapidly changing magnitude, orientation, and interpretation of *jûdô* can provide us with a fascinating topic for historical study and research, for the movement reflects the development of changing cultural attitudes and concerns.

This paper attempts to show that the idealization of *bushi* (warriors) is a recent construct. When the modern forms of martial arts were developed, the military history of Japan was going through a profound spiritual revision. That is, it was claimed that the *bushi* followed a *dô*, or spiritual path, that intimately linked their fighting spirit with Zen Buddhism. This historical revisionism has affected the philosophical development of *jûdô*, in Japan and, perhaps even more so, in the West.

In order to examine this rewriting of history and reality, I shall trace the process by which the killing *art* of *jûjutsu* was modernized in the late nineteenth century by Dr. Jigorô Kanô. Since that time, *jûdô* has gone through a circular development. When the *bushi* used the art in its early forms, it was the quintessence of competition (life and death) and pragmatism (there are no rules in war). After Kanô revived the art as *jûdô*, he gave it a distinctly philosophical and moral bent, that was mostly concerned with proper form and execution. Finally, in the present day, *jûdô* as the modern sport is again marked by extremely difficult competition and an emphasis on pragmatism (of course the stakes now are much lower—only prestige and money). Yet these are not inviable divisions. *Jûdô* retains a number of pre-modern elements, like the emphasis on pre-arranged forms (called *kata*) and its adherence to old Japanese concepts of courtesy and etiquette; and the modern sport *jûdô* person does still make reference to the early philosophy of the martial arts.

It should be noted that this essay concentrates on Japanese *jûdô* from the

2. William Wayne Paul, *The Social Significance of the Asian Martial Arts* (Unpublished: San Francisco State University, 1974), 1.

3. Allen Guttmann, *From Ritual to Record: The Nature of Modern Sports* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), 150.

4. Richard D. Mandell, *Sport: A Cultural History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 101.

late Edo period (1603–1868) to the mid twentieth century. This has been done so as to focus on the period in which the most profound changes were being wrought in the concept of the art. Moreover, the paper glosses over the organizational development of *jūdō*, in order to accord more space to its philosophical development.

I

The term *jūdō* (“the Way of pliancy”) is actually a linguistic modification of an earlier term *jūjutsu* (“the technique of pliancy”). The two arts are on the same continuum, with *jūjutsu* being the historical precursor to *jūdō*. Yet *jūjutsu* itself is an exceedingly broad appellation, denoting a great range of dissimilar techniques and styles. Draeger and Smith⁵ “define” it thus: “*Jūjutsu* can, therefore, be defined as various armed and unarmed fighting systems that can be applied against armed or unarmed enemies.” Obviously, this is not a terribly helpful definition, for it seems to include all of the martial arts. Despite this problem of denotation, we can trace the lineage of modern *jūdō* with some precision by limiting our definition of *jūjutsu* primarily to empty-hand fighting systems which use a minimum of direct strikes that were developed mostly after 1600.

Perhaps from the dawn of human society, fighting and wrestling have been a significant part of every culture—Japan is no exception. From the start, we find mention of this sort of combat in the early chronicles. In the *Kojiki*, an early Japanese history, the commoner Takeminakata-no-kami fought the divine wrestler Takemikazuchi-no-kami for control of the land. Takemikazuchi won the islands for the sun goddess and her descendants (the people of Japan).⁶ Later, the *Nihon Shoki*, another history of Japan, chronicled an epic wrestling bout on a beach during the reign of emperor Sujin (249–280 c.e.).⁷ The combat concluded when one of the wrestlers, Nominosuke, threw his opponent, Taimano Kehaya, to the ground and kicked him to death. This sort of brutal contest characterized what was to be called *jujutsu* up until fairly late into the Edo period (1600–1868).

Ironically, the time of the “classical warrior” (up to the late sixteenth century) is commonly idealized as a time when the warriors followed a pure *dō*—that is, a path of pure and direct spirituality that was said to be an essential part of being a warrior.⁸ This *dō* was to regulate every aspect of the warrior’s life and make him a spiritually rich, contributing member of

5. Donn F. Draeger and Robert W. Smith, *Asian Fighting Arts* (Palo Alto, California: Kodansha International, 1969), 133.

6. Kyūzō Mifune, *Canon of Jūdō: Principle and Technique* (Tokyo: Seibundo-Shinkosha Publishing Co., 1961), 19.

7. Draeger and Smith, *Asian Fighting Arts*, 131.

8. *Dō* (Ch. *tao*), literally translated as “Way” or “Path”—it has come to be connected to many Japanese arts like tea ceremony (*sadō*), flower arrangement (*kadō*), and incense ceremony (*kodō*). Additionally, the major martial arts such as the sword (*kendō*), bow (*kyūdō*) and empty hands (*karate-dō*) all refer to the idea that they, like Zen, lead to enlightenment (*satori*) and are entire systems of living—philosophical, moral, physical, and spiritual.

society. Nonetheless, old “war tales” (*Gunki monogatari*) give us the distinct feeling that this “Warrior’s Way” was most often observed in the breach. Numerous stories of disloyalty, treachery, and cowardice have been passed down.⁹ This alone should make us question the bizarre assertion that the early Japanese warrior was some sort of physically, morally, and spiritually superior being for the reason that he followed the tenets of the warrior’s *dô*.

The precursors of *jûjutsu* in medieval times (c.1185–c.1600) were many. It was not until the last century that the multitudinous forms of the martial arts were brought together under immense umbrellas like “karate” or “jûdô.” One of the most important of these premodern forms was *sumai* (lit. “to struggle”). The combat techniques that were developed under the rubric of *sumai* were the predecessors of all Japanese empty-hand martial arts.¹⁰ One of these lines evolved into the style today called *yoroi kumi-uchi* (“grappling in armor”). This style involved techniques by which two warriors clad in full armor could do battle if they somehow lost their weapons. As empty-hand strikes would have been ineffective against someone so protected, the system used a variety of throws and holds which would allow one to use a special dagger to kill one’s opponent. Of course, to the *bushi* who never let his sword leave his side, *jûjutsu* was the very last resort; thus, it was relegated to a relatively minor position in the overall canon of techniques.

It is important to answer the question as to whether or not the concept of the Way was present at this early time. In the Kamakura era (1185–1333) some warriors spoke of *kyûba no michi* (“the way of horse and bow”). This incorporated Shintô and Confucianist thought and stressed bravery in battle and loyalty to one’s lord. However, the awareness and practice of this “Way” was confined to a rather minuscule portion of the nation. It is very important to note that even the most dedicated *bushi* expected to be well-rewarded for their services to their liege.¹¹ In the following periods, the Muromachi (1392–1573) and Azuchi-Momoyama (1573–1600), loyalty became a “nominal virtue.”¹² As the society became more and more chaotic and unstable, self-interest seemed to win far more victories for the warriors than self-abnegating loyalty. While one should recognize that there actually were small pockets of people who honestly pursued the ideal of a frugal and deeply spiritual life, the fact remains that the majority of warriors never thought consciously of the Way. While some may argue that their practice was simply unstated but still present (“beyond words” like Zen), it seems far more probable that the vast majority of the *bushi* did not care about *satori* (Zen enlightenment)—they wanted survival.

9. Donn F. Draeger, *Classical Bujutsu: the Martial Arts and the Ways of Japan: Volume I* (New York: Weatherhill, 1973), 13.

10. Draeger and Smith, *Asian Fighting Arts*, 131.

11. Draeger, *Bujutsu*, 18.

12. Draeger and Smith, *Asian Fighting Arts*, 85.

The Edo period began around 1603. By spreading a “network of tyranny” throughout the land, the ruling family (the Tokugawa) were able to create a government which lasted unchallenged through 14 generations of their line.¹³ It was not until Perry “opened” Japan in 1853 that the nation saw any significant, widespread strife again. The basically civilian government officials tried to completely control the populace and yoke them to the status quo. The social classes were separated more rigidly, and there was a strong emphasis on the past. Additionally, tight legislative and police control mitigated against the sort of fighting that was so common during the time of the “classical warrior.” Therefore, the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries saw a significant rise in the number of schools specializing in empty-hands forms, and a concurrent decline of the older, battle-oriented fighting arts.¹⁴

During this time of relative tranquility, the *bushi* remained as the privileged class, yet they maintained this exalted position through birthright, not through fighting skill:

Some of the *jūjutsu-ryū* became abstract and exaggerated. In the course of time it was this type of *jūjutsu* that came to be most well known. The warrior class, which had developed and nurtured combat *jūjutsu*, slipped gradually into oblivion.”

As a “class of armed idlers,” the obsolescent soldiers were of profound concern to the government.¹⁶ In the mid-seventeenth century, groups of masterless samurai, called *ronin*, were constantly causing civil disturbances such as brawls and riots. Without the warfare of earlier time to occupy them, even *bushi* who were serving a lord turned to the dissipation of drink and fighting. To combat this tendency, the government encouraged the men of this class to become bureaucrats, instead of *bushi*.¹⁷ This emasculation of the warrior class was further accomplished by keeping the fighters busy with a lot of pomp and ceremony, which allowed them nonetheless to bask in their forebears’ past martial glory.¹⁸ The state’s Neo-Confucianism discouraged excessive martial ardor, and pushed more worship of tradition itself.¹⁹ Tea ceremony, poetry, dancing, and painting came to occupy more time than martial training. Thus, with declining skill in the weapons arts, *jūjutsu*, once a minor martial technique, became the measure of ability for the anachronistic

13. Donn F. Draeger, *Classical Budo: the Martial Arts and Ways of Japan: Volume II* (New York: Weatherhill, 1973), 14.

14. Oscar Ratti and Adele Westbrook, *Secrets of the Samurai* (Rutland, Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle, 1974) 344.

15. Draeger and Smith, *Asian Fighting Arts*, 137.

16. *IBID.*, 86.

17. When the warriors felt compelled to study the martial arts, they were pushed into the newly developed, quasi-martial *dō* forms, which served as a good way to channel the *bushi*’s excess energy (Draeger, *Budo*, 69). Moreover, study of the *dō* was supposed to make students diligent, hard-working, courteous, pure, and upright—all useful characteristics for a productive citizen.

18. Draeger, *Bujutsu*, 49.

19. Draeger, *Budo*, 17.

fighting class.²⁰ Herein, the *bushi* were placed in an “ethical straightjacket” where they were prevented from living up to their martial tradition, yet they were compelled to revel in the glory of this past.

Concomitant with the decline of the *bushi* was the rise of the merchant classes. Though these entrepreneurs were faced with very stiff taxation, they were accorded a lot more freedom to enjoy their wealth and free time (within societal limits).²¹ Thus, many of this group became interested in the martial arts. They intermingled with unemployed *bushi* and developed a great many styles (mostly types of *jūjutsu*) that completely lacked any sort of martial experience.²² As one nineteenth-century observer noted, “The wealthy farmers have forgotten their rank. They . . . wear swords [and] practice the military arts.”²³ This was the start of a group of martial arts significantly divorced from their original, practical, battlefield conception.

The early schools of *jūjutsu*, like Takenouchi ryū,²⁴ were a very eclectic group. There were at least 179 different schools recorded²⁵ and they went by a multitude of names—*kogusoku*, *koshi-no-mawari*, *hobaku*, *taijutsu*, *wajutsu*, *torite*, *kenpō*, *hakuda*, *shubaku*, *yawara*—and dealt with a great variety of small weapons and empty-hands techniques.²⁶ The schools of the Edo period made substantial modifications to the earlier, purely pragmatic martial arts traditions. While exclusively empty-hand forms were primarily a product of the subsequent era, these Edo schools tended more and more towards specialization—that is, to non-combat-tested, empty-hands techniques.²⁷ Moreover, most schools only stressed one or two major methods (striking, throwing, choking, joint locks, etc.).²⁸ The need for technical achievements lessened as the peaceful times wore on, and beauty of motion as achieved by minimum use of strength became more and more prized. This radical aesthetics was developed to absurdity in some schools, which went so far as to claim that physical strength was a detriment *jūjutsu*.

This is not to say that the matches among the various practitioners were not dangerous. Even at the end of this period, the bouts could still be quite brutal:

20. Draeger, *Bujutsu*, 50.

21. Draeger, *Budo*, 18.

22. Paul, *Social Significance*, 60.

23. *Ibid.*, 22.

24. This was one of the first real *jūjutsu* schools to be founded (by Takenouchi Chumutaku Hisamori in 1532). It became widely known after a practitioner of the style defeated a much larger opponent in a match (Sadaki Nakabayashi, Yoshihiro Uchida, and George Uchida, *Fundamentals of Jūdō* (New York: Ronald Press Company, 1964), 3.

25. The main school of Tokugawa times were: Takenouchi, led by Takenouchi Hisamori (1520–1595); Sekiguchi, led by Sekiguchi Ujimune (1597–1670); Kitō, led by Terada Masashige (1618–1674); Shibukawa, led by Shibukawa Yoshikata (1652–1704); and Tenshin Shin'yō, led by Iso Masatari (1786–1863) (Kenji Tomiki, *Kodansha Encyclopedia of Japan, Vol. 4* (New York: Kodansha International, 1983). Others included Yoshin, Yagyu Shingan, Kyushin, and Muso (Mifune, *Canon*). 22. There was a lot of overlap in the techniques of these schools, but all claim “purity” of tradition and a unique line of descent.

26. Draeger, *Budo*, 108; Tomiki, *Encyclopedia*, 82; Draeger and Smith, *Asian Fighting Arts*, 136.

27. Draeger, *Budo*, 106.

28. Draeger and Smith, *Asian Fighting Arts*, 133.

In those days the contests were extremely rough and not infrequently cost the participants their lives. Thus, whenever I sallied forth to take part in any of those affairs, I invariably bade farewell to my parents, since I had no assurance that I should ever return alive.²⁹

Because the *jūjutsu* schools became increasingly the domain of ne'er-do-wells and thugs, they eventually lost popularity with general public in late Edo times—"reckless application of *jūjutsu* on innocent people made rowdiness and *jūjutsu* synonymous."³⁰ Thus, by the time Dr. Jigorō Kanō came on to the scene in the 1860s, he had to overcome great obstacles to the acceptance of his art as a way of moral development.

As stated earlier, the Japanese concept of the *dō* was important in the development of modern *jūdō*.³¹ Influenced by Taoist and Confucian conceptions of the *Tao* or "Way [of Heaven]", the Japanese molded the idea to fit native religious and political requirements. For some later practitioners of the art, *dō*, became an all-encompassing concept which made the heart of the martial arts beat.³² *Dō* was seen as a road or path to follow as a means of self-cultivation and perfection in this life.

Closely connected to this new formulation was Zen Buddhism. A sort of "plastic Zen" developed—warriors, in an attempt to justify their obsolescent place in the society³³ took several small parts from the broader Zen concept and applied them to their own art.³⁴ To these "Zen arts," perfection of self was more important than perfection of technique. As it was said that the "mind" of the martial arts was one in the same with the Zen mind, the "Zen warrior" was to become self-reliant, self-denying, and single-minded. Since this mythic fighter would have no attachment to life or death (*seishin o choetsu*—"transcending life and death"), he could calmly accept the ever-presence of death in his profession.³⁵ With stoic composure and trust in fate, this warrior would practice the "artless art," which transcended technique.³⁶

These ideas caught the fancy of a great many contemporary practitioners who stressed *principles* of the "Way" rather than the *product* of the techniques. Few of the original formulators of this theory would have guessed how very pervasive these ideas would become. A cursory survey of the current literature on the "Way of the martial arts" will provide innumerable examples of this tendency:

29. E.J. Harrison, *The Fighting Spirit of Japan* (Woodstock, New York: Overlook Press, 1982), 88.

30. Draeger and Smith, *Asian Fighting Arts*, 138.

31. Draeger, *Budo*, 25.

32. Mifune, *Canon*, 27.

33. Draeger, *Budo*, 25.

34. Michael Maliszewski, "Fighting Arts and Martial Ways," *Journal of Asian Martial Arts* 1,3 (July 1992): 24.

35. Draeger, *Budo*, 31.

36. Draeger and Smith, *Asian Fighting Arts*, 95.

The mastery of any martial art is extremely difficult to achieve and master status cannot be reached unless the student is trained to the Zen doctrine level of enlightenment.³⁷

Concepts of Zen and Bushidō [the Way of the Warrior] are at the core of values in both Japanese society and judo participation.”

Herein, we can see a very important shift of priorities—classical martial arts stressed (in order) combat, discipline, and morals; the new martial ways stressed morals, discipline, and aesthetic form.³⁹ Though some of the classical forms persist to the present day, they are hardly noticeable next to the gargantuan edifice of the *dō* forms.

This assertion that the martial arts are closely connected to inner Zen doctrine cannot go unchallenged. While it is true that the Kamakura government allied itself to the new Zen faith, it was primarily as a way to gain much needed cultural legitimacy. The idea of the Zen-influenced *dō* is largely a twentieth-century construct, in fact, the first explicit formulation of these theories did not occur until the mid-eighteenth century.⁴⁰ Moreover, many of those who claimed to follow these lofty aspirations were hardly scrupulous in living up to them. As Ratti and Westbrook (447) put it:

Whenever the doctrine of bujutsu attempts to claim the lofty beliefs of the Oriental doctrines of enlightenment as the inspirational motivations underlying the practice of the martial arts, it must be observed that to proclaim one's adherence to these values in theory and to live up to them in practice . . . are two entirely different things.⁴¹

Today, this trend continues as the market is glutted with the “Zen and the Art of” books. As a buzzword, advertisers realize that the exotic mysticism of Zen sells, and researchers like Csikszentmihalyi and Maslow find that Zen and the *dō* concept are useful paradigms around which to center their psychological discussions.⁴² Yet these manifestations have little to do with the actual practice of Zen. Perhaps the most logical statement comes from Tu Wei Ming, a prominent scholar of Chinese and Japanese Buddhism: “. . . without practicing *zazen* or doing *koan* for the sake of *satori*, he [the practitioner of ‘Zen arts’] ceases to be a student of Zen.”⁴³ At best, we can term the martial

37. Ken Min, “Martial Arts in the American Educational Setting,” *Quest* XXXI. 2 (1979): 97.

38. *Comparative Physical Education and Sport* 3 (Champaign, Illinois: Human Kinetics, 1986), 248.

39. Draeger, *Budo*, 36.

40. Much of what current proponents of the “Way” believe can be traced to the influence of twentieth-century writers like D. T. Suzuki. His books like *Zen in Japanese Culture* paint a picture of the classical *bushido* that probably stems more from nationalism than good scholarship. See Draeger and Smith, *Asian Fighting Arts*, 90, 94.

41. Ratti and Westbrook, *Secrets*, 447.

42. Joel Thirer and Mark D. Grabiner, “Self Actualization Through Zen and the Martial Arts,” *Review of Sport and Leisure* V, 2 (Winter 1990): 80.

43. *Zazen* is “sitting meditation,” *koan* are riddles meant to push one's mind beyond the confines of rationality, and *satori* is enlightenment or *nirvana*; H. Brinker, R. P. Kramer, and C. Ouwehand, *Zen in China, Japan, and East Asian Art* (New York: Peter Lang Publisher, 1985), 25.

arts “Zen-influenced,” but they are clearly not Zen itself.

Despite the contrary historical facts, there has been a definite trend to rewrite the martial past of Japan. This tendency was most marked in the Edo period (when the government welcomed the idealization of the warrior’s way) and in the time of the early contact of Japan with the Occident. The *bushi* was not only idealized as the model warrior but as the model person, spiritually and morally. T. Shindachi, in one of the first lectures on *jūdō*, in the West (at the Japan Society of London in 1892), reflects this tendency:

Historically considered, it is quite obvious that *Ju-jitsu*, and other military exercises, had wonderful influence in the maintenance of the old chivalric spirit. It is remarkable how well-maintained was social morality through the period of the feudal system in Japan. when there was no established religion fit for the purpose.⁴⁴

Whether the good lecturer had simply forgotten completely the long and bloody history of the martial arts in his country we cannot say, but the comment does point up the tendency to rewrite the past, in what may be seen as a defense of Japan’s cultural forms to the West.

II

For a great many people, the name Kanō Jigorō conjures up romantic images of a man selflessly devoted to the promotion of physical, moral, and spiritual development of the world.⁴⁵ Unlike many halfway-deified founding figures, Dr. Kanō was probably as great a man as he is generally made out to be.⁴⁶ He was born on October 28, 1860, in Hyōgo prefecture in Japan.⁴⁷ The new Meiji government came to power when he was eight years old. With its rise came a period of intense industrialization and modernization that laid the foundation of Japan’s current economic ascendancy. People of this time constantly kept an eye out for anything that was inefficient or antiquated. Kanō himself was no exception. In Tōkyō University’s Political Science and Economics Department (class of 1881), he studied, among other things, utilitarian thought of the West. This philosophy was to have great influence on his later reformulation of *jūdō*. While Kanō was committed to modernization, he firmly believed in tradition, but only where it was functional. He saw the decline of many native traditions that went with the country’s mania for and

44. T. Shindachi, “‘Ju-jitsu’, The Ancient Art of Self-Defence by Sleight of Body,” *Transactions and Proceedings of the Japan Society* 1 (1892): 11.

45. Paul, *Social Significance*, 62.

46. A full listing of the work Kanō did for his society outside of *jūdō* could take up a chapter in itself. A few of these contributions include: director of Tōkyō Higher Normal School (now Tōkyō University of Education) for 23 years, Chief of the Education bureau for the Japanese Ministry of Education, founder of Kotoshi Han College, now Kkyoiku Daigaku (Tōkyō University of Education) (Paul, *Social Significance*, 61), and founder and first president of the Japanese Amateur Athletic Association in 1911 (Brian Caffery and Desmond Marwood, *The Jūdō Handbook: From Beginner to Black Belt* New York: Gallery Books, 1989), 11.

47. Robert W. Smith, *A Complete Guide to Judo: Its History and Practice* (Rutland, Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1966) 21.

blind acceptance of things Western. This made the Japanese abandon much of what was distinctive to their culture.

Within this milieu, Kanô began his study of *jûjutsu*. After a difficult search for qualified teachers, he studied at two schools, Kitô-ryû and Tenshin Shin'yô-ryû. After practicing in these schools for about four years, he came to the conclusion that no teacher had grasped the total concept of *jûdô*—that is, the *jûjutsu* teachers of the time only knew “tricks” and had no appreciation of the underlying theory of the art.⁴⁸

In order to rectify this problem, Kanô founded his own school, the *Kôdôkan*⁴⁹, in February of the 15th year of Meiji (1882) at the age of 23.⁵⁰ This first school, in a spare room at Eishoji temple in Tôkyô, was a tiny room of only 10 mats (about 180ft²) in which nine trainees studied. This is in sharp contrast to the present-day Kôdôkan International Jûdô Center, which is a modern, seven-story building, containing several practice halls, lodging, conference and exhibition facilities, administration offices, *jûdô* hall of fame, and a 500-seat viewing area.⁵¹ Though one would not know it from looking at this latter structure, the original Kôdôkan was identified with ruffian *jûjutsu* and the students there had to pretend that they were taking English lessons from Dr. Kanô.⁵²

Despite some initial snags, the *jûdô* movement grew astonishingly rapidly. The Peers' School (Gakushûin University) was the first to include *jûdô* in its curriculum in 1883, and the Ministry of Education made *jûdô* compulsory for middle-school students in 1911.⁵³ Competing *jûjutsu* schools were quickly quieted when Kanô's students won easily in a contest in 1886. By 1905, the majority of the *jûjutsu* schools had merged with the Kôdôkan.⁵⁴ The steady ascent of *jûdô* was only temporarily set back when all of the martial arts were prohibited by the Occupation after WWII. In 1951, school *jûdô* was revived and the servicemen of the occupying forces took *jûdô* back to their homes around the world. In the next year, the International Jûdô Federation was established with 17 participating countries, and by 1956, the first world *jûdô* championships were held in Tokyo.

The outbreak of war in 1937 was heartbreaking for Kanô. His hopes of making *jûdô* an Olympic sport seemed thwarted, and the international education which he had so hoped for seemed doomed. In 1938, Kanô Jigorô died of pneumonia at the age of 78, *en route* home from the Cairo IOC meeting.⁵⁵ As

48. Caffery, *Judo Handbook*, 11; Bruce Tegner, *The Complete Book of Judo* (New York: Bantam Books, 1967), 12.

49. The full name was actually *Nihon-den Kôdôkan Jûdô*.

50. Mifune, *Canon*, 24.

51. Caffery, *Judo Handbook*, 11.

52. John N. Pyecha, Peter Altmann, Kyung Ho Min, and Michael R. Bula, “Martial Arts in Physical Education,” *Journal of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation* XLII, 3 (1971): 34.

53. Tomiki, *Encyclopedia*, 82.

54. Ratti and Westbrook, *Secrets*, 353.

55. Pyecha, “Physical Education,” 34.

we have seen, his *jūdō* spread rapidly under his able successors.

The original *jūdō* movement, as envisioned by Dr. Kanō had three explicit aims: to bring Japan up to speed with the West (by overcoming the perceived military and physical inferiority), to disseminate the ideals *jūdō* internationally, and to educate the practitioners.⁵⁶ I shall focus on this last goal.

Kanō said, “Nothing under the sun is greater than education.”⁵⁷ To this aim, he established a program of physical, moral, and philosophical development that was meant to heighten self-awareness and understanding of human interaction and inculcate the “classic values” of the *bushi* (such as loyalty and hard work).⁵⁸ Physical education was an important consideration in selecting the *jūjutsu* techniques which became a part of the *jūdō* canon. Kanō modified the *jūjutsu* forms “so that they fulfill the conditions necessary for the harmonious development of the body.”⁵⁹ He eliminated or modified hazardous holds and techniques and introduced *randori*, or free-style wrestling, so that the students could practice hard, but would not be beset by the constant injuries that plagued the old *jūjutsu* schools.⁶⁰ “But Mr. Kanō modified *Jujitsu* to such an extent as to make it more suitable for physical culture than for breaking the legs or twisting the arms of an enemy.”⁶¹

Kanō felt that the aesthetic, healthful, and practical dimensions of the techniques were equally important for *jūdō* as a viable method of physical education.

Dr. Kanō made several technical modifications that were to have profound effects on later *jūdō*. Most prominent among these was the rejection of the traditional *menkyo* (license) system in favor of a belt system which he developed around 1867.⁶² Kanō’s practice of dividing the *jūdō* practitioners into various levels was reflected by different colored belts. His belts were originally of only three colors—white, brown, and black. But by the time *jūdō*, arrived in Europe, this had become the veritable rainbow that is the present system—white, yellow, orange, green, blue, brown, black, and red and white belts,⁶³ This system was quickly adopted by other schools of martial arts.

56. Kanō was alarmed that the traditional arts were being supplanted by European military exercises. Although *jūdō* may seem reminiscent of these German and Swedish gymnastics (Richard D. Mandell, *Sport: A Cultural History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 102, its internationalism is in sharp contrast to the nationalism of these Western movements; Harrison, *Fighting Spirit*, 22.

57. Pyecha “Physical Education,” 34.

58. *Comparitive*, 244.

59. Jigorō Kanō, “The Contribution of Judo to Education,” *Journal of Health and Physical Education*: November 1932.

60. In many ways, *jūdō* has become almost exclusively *randori* (B. C. Goodger and J. M. Goodger, “Jūdō in the Light of Theory and Sociological Research,” *International Review of Sport Sociology* XII, 1 (1977): 9. Clearly, Kanō never intended this skewed emphasis, but the hegemony of competition has, by and large, pushed out the other facets of the practice.

61. Tsuneo Matsudaira, “Sports and Physical Training in Modern Japan,” *Transactions and Proceedings of the Japan Society (of London)*, VII (1907–1909): 120.

62. Draeger and Smith, *Asian Fighting Arts*, 139; Paul, *Social Significance*, 6.

63. Tomiki, *Encyclopedia*, 83.

Despite Dr. Kanô's efforts at modernizing the art, he did *not* reject the old forms completely. Up to the present day, some schools still teach *atemi* (striking to specific parts of the body), *katsu* ("resuscitation" techniques for strangled victims), and *kata*. The last is a very formal set of prearranged techniques which stress proper form and mental composure. Kanô placed as much or more emphasis on these *kata* as he did on competition.⁶⁴ It is clear that he never wished the sportive elements to dominate, but relegated them to a clearly secondary position.⁶⁵

One should not forget that the revolution that was *jûdô* involved far more than just changes in the outward form and technique. As one of the most important leaders of the art asserted, "To master an actual trick [*waza*], mental culture should come first."⁶⁶ Thus, a great deal of stress was placed on the mental education of the *jûdô* practitioner.

From the start, Dr. Kanô identified *jûdô* with a rigorous moral culture:

The training in Jiudo has a special moral import in Japan because Jiudo together with other martial exercises, was practiced by our Samurai. who had a high code of honor, the spirit of which has been bequeathed to us through the teaching of the art.⁶⁷

Here, we see clearly how Kanô "nudged" history to lend credence to his art and glorify the nation's martial past. Regardless, many people accepted this interpretation and sought to emulate what they thought of as the classical warrior ideal. The *bushi* of this time were supposed to be models of politeness, veracity, honor, and loyalty.⁶⁸ Whether this had any significant basis in fact became immaterial. As Kanô worked towards the idea of the "Way of softness," he voiced many concepts that quickly took hold in the popular consciousness. Again, we can turn to Shindachi for a list of the virtues of *jûjutsu* (*jûdô*): "respect and kindness, fidelity and sincerity, calm, prudence, temperance, perseverance, presence of mind, quick discernment, decision after deliberation, self-respect and self-control, greatness of mind, obedience to duty, abhorrence of extravagance, and increased powers of memorization, attention, concentration, imagination and speculation"⁶⁹ Kanô and others believed that by practicing under a suitable master, "one comes naturally to honor one's temperament and foster a noble and vigorous character."⁷⁰ Thus, *jûdô* was seen as inherently moral and worthwhile.

64. Tegner, *Complete Book of Jûdô*, 180.

65. Draeger and Smith, *Asian Fighting Arts*, 138.

66. Mifune, *Canon*, 28.

67. Kanô, *Jiudo to Education*, 40.

68. Draeger and Smith, *Asian Fighting Arts*, 88.

69. Shindachi, "Ancient Art," 12.

70. Matsushita, 71.

Akira Kurosawa's 1942 movie, *Sugata Sanshiro*, chronicles the philosophic maturation of the title character under the tutelage of a *jūdō* teacher named Yano (Kanō). As one of the characters states, "Yano taught him what life is." Increasingly Sanshiro realized that physical prowess is not enough. He had to understand the depths of the *philosophy* of the martial arts in order to be a true practitioner. Ironically, the lotus, a Buddhist symbol of peace, became the symbol of the heart of the warrior's *dō*, for him. His teacher told him unequivocally, "It is nature's rule by which we live and die . . . Only through this truth can you die peacefully. This is the essence of any life—*Jūdō* too." Herein we see that, at least in the early years of the movement, no one could be a student of just the techniques of *jūdō*—the philosophy was an essential and inseparable part of the whole concept.

Dr. Kanō's philosophical additions to the art are just as innovative and sweeping as his revision of the physical and moral techniques. He strongly espoused practice of the art as a *dō*, an all-encompassing way of life:

The object of physical training in Jiudo is not only to develop the body but to enable a man or woman to have a perfect control over mind or body. . . .⁷¹

While the ideas that Kanō developed later came to be referred to by many as "an obfuscatory aura of feudalistic mumbo-jumbo," they remain an essential part of Kanō's original vision.⁷² Yet, it should not be thought that the philosophic concepts necessarily were present, as Kanō and others claim, throughout Japan's martial history.

When Kanō Jigorō opened the Kōdōkan Cultural Center in January 1922, he announced the two great principles of *jūdō* as "improvement through spiritual strength and the mutual benefit of oneself and others."⁷³ These two points became the center of much of Kanō's later philosophical and social writing:

The actual facts prove that our society is lacking in something which, if brought to light and universally acknowledged, can remodel the present society and bring greater happiness and satisfaction to this world. This is the teaching of maximum efficiency and mutual welfare and benefit.⁷⁴

The first of these two concepts is *jita kyoie* ("self perfection and mutual welfare and benefit"). Kanō felt it involved a perfectly natural progression: from perfection of the self, to bettering individual human relations, to an improvement of society at large. Through the study of *jūdō*, Kanō claimed that one not only raises one's own moral and spiritual state, but one also, "contributes to happiness of mankind and its peaceful development to add to

71. Kanō, *Jiudo to Education*, 39.

72. G. R. Gleason, *Judo for the West* (South Brunswick: A. S. Barnes and Company, 1967): 13.

73. Matsushita, 74.

74. Kanō, *Jiudo to Education*, 58.

the welfare of the world.”⁷⁵ Thus, Kanô linked his conception of the *dô* to social as well as personal development.

The second principle, *seiryoku-zen'yo* (“maximum efficiency”), guided much of Kanô’s innovative development of technique. Drawing on pragmatic utilitarianism, he saw the “flexibility” of *jû* (in *jûdô* and *jûjutsu*) as making sense because it minimizes the expenditure of force by not meeting the force head on, but strategically directing it. Every element of every technique was clearly analyzed—“The true feature of Judo is to show justice through reason . . . that no action is to be done without reason is most important.”⁷⁶ Thus, *jûdô*, like other modern sports reflects an interest in rationality and constant scientific improvement.

While the principle of *seiryoku-zen'yo* has many applications in the physical realm, Kanô said it could and must also be applied to situations in everyday life:

Thus judo is not merely a technique for competition, but became a “way” which incorporated method and the new purpose of education.⁷⁷

It was at this time when Kanô most clearly stated his conception of the “way.” One does not simply practice *jûdô* on the mat: the way of dealing with others and the values which the practice inculcates must be carried over into every aspect of one’s life. Otherwise, Kanô says, one is not doing *jûdô*. The warrior that is the *jûdô* practitioner seeks true spiritual perfection through his study and, according to Kanô, is one of a long and distinguished line who practiced the martial arts with the pure, unclouded mind of Zen.

III

Many modern *jûdô* players only pay lip service to Kanô’s ideas and some, such as Bruce Tegner, take issue with the whole concept of the *dô*.⁷⁸ Tegner feels that *jûdô* should be divorced from the mysticism that has been built up around it:

By encouraging players of moderate ability, by encouraging players who would not accept Judo as a Way of Life, by encouraging Judo play in the same way we encourage weekly bowling, tennis, and swimming . . . [this will] gain for Judo in America the popularity it deserves.⁷⁹

75. Mifune, *Canon*, 25.

76. *Ibid.*, 27.

77. Malsaushita, 76.

78. Tegner, *Complete Book of Jûdô*, 11.

79. *Ibid.*, 14.

While this may be a classically American reaction to the sometimes oppressively pervading aspect of the *dō*, it echoes the sentiments of perhaps the majority of modern *jūdō*, practitioners. The *dō* is, by and large, considered an unimportant part of modern, tournament-oriented *jūdō*. No matter how far the practice of the sport strays from Kanō's original notion, the faction represented by Tegner has become a necessary and essential aspect of the modern sport of *jūdō*.

The other assertion with which Tegner takes issue is that a *jūdō* player *naturally* become more morally and spiritually enriched by his or her study. The idea of automatic value inculcation can easily be shown empirically false. For if it were true, all *jūdō* players would be, "as Dr. Kanō says, "earnest, sincere, thoughtful, cautious, deliberate in all dealings, [would have] a high degree of mental composure [and would have developed] to a high degree the exercise of the power of imagination, of reasoning, and of judgment applied at all times to the activities of daily life."⁸⁰ Clearly this has never been the case for the population of *jūdō* practitioners. Even from the start of the *jūdō* movement, there was a fairly large gap between theory and practice for many studying the art. As E. J. Harrison cautions, ". . . we may still arrogate to ourselves freedom to doubt whether the typical heavyweight Japanese or Western *Jūdō* champion of today could pass an examination in the alleged philosophy of the art."⁸¹ Herein, we can witness the slow death of the inner spirituality of *jūdō* (in mainstream society) under the crushing progress of that unstoppable force called modernization.

It is ironic that *jūdō*, a creation meant to represent modernized, forward-thinking ideas of physical and mental culture, is constantly criticized as being too antiquated and bound up in tradition. Almost as soon as Kanō founded the art, there were people, Westerners and Easterners alike, who wanted to pare off all of the "philosophical malarkey" so that nothing but pure sport would remain. These people seem to have seen nothing sacred about the original conception of the founder:

A sport that resists change dies judoka [*jūdō* players] cannot be content to rest on their traditions and dogmas what is now needed is not an approach to judo as a stylized form of Japanese wrestling nor as unarmed combat nor as a twentieth century alternative to the 'noble art of self defense' . . .⁸²

The players of the sport of *jūdō* as it is now practiced have little time to devote to perfection of character. for everyone now needs to spend all his/her time practicing for the stiffer tournament competition on all levels.

In the early years of *jūdō*'s interaction with the West, the foreign practitioners tended to be attracted to the art for its philosophical undertones, such

80. *Ibid.*, 13.

81. Smith, *History and Practice*, 13.

82. Gleason, *Judo for the West*, 11.

as the concept of the Zen-influenced *dô*. This has given way to a new generation of practitioners far less concerned with any sort of mental education, and almost exclusively focused on competition, especially at the international level.⁸³ It is significant that the British, who introduced the expanded system of colored belts in 1927, were having tournament matches by 1929.⁸⁴ The first international competition took place in Frankfurt am Main in 1932, while the Japanese-sponsored, first World Championships came only in 1956.⁸⁵ As Draeger asserts, these two approaches are basically antithetical to each other: "It is patent that no sport can ever be a true classical *dô* form; no classical *dô* can ever house a sport entity."⁸⁶ Thus we can perceive a clear break, as significant as the division between *jûdô* and *jûjutsu*—the traditional *jûdô* has given way to a new form of modern sport *jûdô* that sees competition as an end in itself. For the majority of today's *jûdô* players, then, ". . . there is little indication that Judo is experienced as sacred or that any interest in Zen Buddhism evolves from it."⁸⁷ Sports science is a far more important "religion" than Zen for this new brand of athlete. Thus, for many *jûdô* practitioners, we can bid a summary farewell to all of Kanô's high-minded concepts of crafting morally and spiritually strong men and women.

Some very interesting parallels can be drawn between Pierre de Coubertin's Olympics and Kanô Jigorô's *jûdô*. Basically contemporaneous, both movements were based in nineteenth-century liberalism. As Shigeyoshi Matsumae tells us, "Judo is a representative Japanese sport which has an international character. Forming a culture in itself, judo is contributing enormously to friendship and peace among the nations of the world today . . . judo is helping to promote the happiness and prosperity of all mankind. This is judo's mission and there can be no loftier goal."⁸⁸ Thus, we can see that *jûdô* and the Olympics shared goals of world peace and internationalism. Moreover, both movements harken back to a classical past (ancient Greece or early *bushi* culture), while espousing a doctrine of constant, rational improvement (cf. *Citius, Altius, Fortius* and *seiryoku zen'yo*).

There are further parallels between *jûdô* and various other Olympic sports. Norbert Elias sees the violent nature of ancient Olympic sport as being closely related to the "fighting ethos of a warrior aristocracy."⁸⁹ Likewise, Kanô modified his techniques to be safer and more effective while maintaining this ethos. The modernization of *jûdô* is also analogous to the process by which pankration (which used strangle holds, joint techniques, trips, and strikes) was turned into

83. Goodger and Goodger, "Light of Theory," 19.

84. B. C. Goodger and J. M. Goodger, "Organization and Cultural Change in Post-War British Jûdô," *International Review of Sport Sociology* XII, 1 (1977): 29.

85. Michel Brousse, "Du Samourai à l'Athlète: L'Essor du Judo en France," *Sport et Histoire* 3 (1989): 17.

86. Draeger, *Budo*, 125.

87. Goodger and Goodger, "British Judo," 44.

88. Isao Inokuma and Nobuyuki Sato. *Best Jûdô* (New York: Kodansha International, 1986). 7.

89. Goodger and Goodger, "Light of Theory," 8.

wrestling and boxing, or folk football became modern soccer.⁹⁰

Kanō strongly supported the Olympic movement from its inception. In 1912, he took two athletes to the Stockholm Olympics, thus bringing Japan into the Olympics for the first time. He made eight subsequent trips to the Olympic Games. Kanō was the first Japanese member of the IOC, and he held his post for nearly 30 years. He “always likened the ideals of Judo to those of the Olympic Games.”⁹¹ Thus, his promotion of Coubertin’s mission was simply an outgrowth of his own personal mission of world education, peace, and morality. As the Japanese were very eager to “catch up” in all aspects of the modern world, the Olympics were seen as an optimal outlet for them—the wins of the Japanese swimmers in 1932 showed clearly that the nation was rather successful in this aim. However, during the very same Olympiad in Los Angeles, Kanō said the following while speaking at the University of Southern California:

What I teach is not technique (*jūjutsu*) but a “way” (*jūdō*) . . . The principle of a “way” is that it is applicable to other aspects of a person’s life the true meaning of judo is the study and practice of mind and body. It is, at the same time, the model for daily life and work.⁹²

At least while Kanō was alive, *Jūdō* still held fast to these ideas. Ironically, it was with the realization of his goal of making *jūdō* an Olympic sport that many of his initial philosophic formulations of the art fell by the wayside.

On October 20, 1964, *jūdō* made its debut at the games of the eighteenth Olympiad in Tōkyō.⁹³ Choosing *jūdō*, over other nations’ forms of native wrestling, the IOC gave the sport a golden opportunity to make its international spread complete. Already the sport was clearly not just confined to Japan. The Dutchman Anton Geesink shocked the *jūdō* world by taking a gold medal in the open category at this first Olympic meeting. Geesink continued the tradition of a strong *jūdō* presence in the Olympic movement when he became an IOC member in 1987. Other *jūdō*, medals at those games were taken by the USSR, West Germany, South Korea, Austria, and the United States. Indubitably, continuing Olympic exposure has given a profound boost to interest in sport *jūdō* (and other combat sports) in all parts of the world.⁹⁴

As the Olympic competition is purely *randori*, it tends to promote tournament competitions (*shiai*) to the detriment of the traditional philosophy and techniques of the art. Gone are the days of Kyūzō Mifune:

90. Pankration parallels the division of *jūjutsu* into *jūdō* and *kenpō* (a style like modern karate). Moreover, Elias and Dunning trace the change from the regional, dangerous play of folk football to international soccer between 1750 and 1890. This is basically contemporaneous with the development of *jūdō*.

91. Smith, *History and Practice*, 23.

92. Matsushita, 67.

93. Pyecha, “Physical Education,” 37.

94. Though *jūdō* was dropped from 1968 Mexico games, it was quickly reinstated in Munich in 1972. Despite the temporary setback, it was constant growth around the world during this time; see Thirer and Grabner, “Self Actualization,” 81.

In a Judo match, participants win by fair play and sway the minds of those who witness the match . . . Judo principle implies the actual idea of mutual prosperity.⁹⁵

For better or for worse, *jûdô* has been profoundly changed by its inclusion in mainstream modern sports. Kanô's philosophy, which was so essential to his conception of *jûdô*, is now relegated to a position where the average *jûdô* player looks bemusedly on any talk of the "Way of softness." Because *jûdô* is a sport, *shiai* has become its *raison d'être*.⁹⁶ As Brousse comments, "Tradition has retreated in the face of modernity."⁹⁷ By and large, then, it is clear that *shiai* has replaced spirit.

Along with its modernization at the hands of Westerners and Western-minded Japanese, *jûdô* has been subsumed more and more into an Anglo American conception of modern sport. As Goodger and Goodger (1977) tell us:

Dr. Kanô's ideas about Judo . . . clearly reveal a very "civilized" view of a fighting system.⁹⁸ His underlying social and educational philosophy, which appears to have been very much accepted not only within the Judo movement but also in much wider educational circles, is both modern and, in many ways, typically Western.⁹⁹

While their assertion that *jûdô* philosophy is now fairly widely accepted seems somewhat suspect, these researches do point out an important point. From the start, *jûdô* was a modernized and, in many ways, Westernized version of the native Japanese *jûjutsu*. As *jûdô* was forced into the mold of Olympic sport, it was subsumed even further into a specifically Western conception of modern athletics.¹⁰⁰ The charges that the Olympic movement and modern sports are a type of "cultural imperialism" in the realm of ideas seems to have some validity here. That is, whereas most traditional games and sports are pushed to the fringes of society, *jûdô* simply made itself part of the center, yet lost a lot of its cultural distinctiveness. While Japanese language and culture is still an important part of its study around the world, *jûdô* is becoming more and more a simple variant of wrestling.

After the Second World War, *jûdô* was the most rapidly growing sport in the world.¹⁰¹ This explosive growth was accompanied by increasing

95. Mifune. *Canon*, 27.

96. Daeshik Kim and Kyung Sun Shin, *Jûdô* (Dubuque, Iowa: William C. Brown Company, 1977), 56.

97. Brousse, "L'Essor du Judo." 21.

98. While it may seem completely absurd to call any system that was originally based in rationalized killing techniques "civilized," Kanô's conception of *jûdô* was meant to civilize and sublimate the brutal warrior tendencies.

99. Goodger and Goodger. "Light of Theory," 9.

100. Allen Guttmann. *The Olympics: A History of the Modern Games* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 172.

101. Nakabayashi, et al., *Fundamentals*, 4.

rationalization and codification of the rules and forms of competition. an increasing international orientation. and increasing organizational scale and complexity.¹⁰²

Since the 1960s, the rule books (which did not exist in any form when Kanō first founded the Kōdōkan) have been continually modified to appeal to spectators. As *jūdō* is generally not conducive to spectatorship because it is so technical, quick, and subtle, additions such as the multiple levels of points and penalties,¹⁰³ and the “noncombativity” penalty (which is given to any contestant who is not visibly aggressive) have substantially diminished the need for a trained eye in watching *jūdō* match.

Also, with the increase in uncritical acceptance of the tournament has been a fixation on the use of “tournament-effective” instead of technically precise or aesthetically pleasing techniques. More and more. training in *jūdō*, is instrumental rather than autotelic. With “Westernization” an explicit aim of many coaches, there is generally less concern for the all-around development of the individual. This has made the tournament virtually the only aspect of Kanō’s *jūdō* still actively supported by sport promoters.¹⁰⁴

It is important to note here that this orientation towards raw pragmatism. devoid of “mysticism,” is a good deal closer to classical *jūjutsu* than Kōdōkan *jūdō*. Like the sport *jūdō*, player of today, the *bushi* of olden times had little time for philosophy and morals that so marked the late-nineteenth century conception of the Zen-influenced *dō*. Of course, modern *jūdō* lacks the important element of a “life or death struggle,” so it is less able to claim some unconscious spirituality. Nonetheless, both classical *jūjutsu* and modern sport *jūdō*, share many of the same mental attitudes towards the development of physical technique. If one must claim that the *dō* still exists in the mainstream, then it is, as Allen Guttmann says, “not a way of life, but . . . the true path to the championship.”¹⁰⁵ This new “*dō*” now leads far more people than the old spirit of Kanō’s philosophical and moral school.

As has been stressed, *jūdō* is a classic example of *Versportlichung* (sportification).¹⁰⁶ Traditional elements like self-defense, *kata*, and bowing and the significance of concepts like *jita kyoei*, *seiryoku zen’yo*, and well-roundedness are all on the decline. To conclude this examination of the modernization of *jūdō*, we can examine the seven characteristics of modern sport as outlined by Guttmann.¹⁰⁷

102. Goodger and Goodger, “Light of Theory,” 16.

103. Kanō originally called for only a one-point match (thus the *jūdō* practitioner had “no second chance”). Next, a “near point” was added and a match was allowed to end in a tie (*hiki-wake*) (Kim and Shin, *Jūdō*, 58). Now there are four levels of both points (*ippon*—10 points, *waza ari*—7 points, *yuko*—5 points, and *koka*—3 points) and their corresponding penalties (*hansoku-made*, *keikoku*, *chui*, *shido*) (Caffery, *Jūdō Handbook*), 139.

104. One could make a strong argument that, other than the techniques, virtually none of Dr. Kanō’s *jūdō* remains in the modern sport; Goodger and Goodger, “Light of Theory,” 25.

105. Allen Guttmann, *A Whole New Ball Game: An Interpretation of American Sports* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina Press, 1988), 181.

106. Guttmann, *Ball Game*, 181.

107. Guttmann, *Ritual*, 16.

First is secularism, little more needs be said how *jūdō* has been divorced from Kanō's philosophies and is now basically culturally indistinct from any other sport.

Secondly, *jūdō* has been open to all classes from the outset. Kanō felt that education in the *dō* could enhance the social integration of class, clan, and region—his disciples ranged from rickshaw men to presidents. Today, there is little economic barrier to studying the art. Classes at a club usually cost around twenty dollars a month and tournaments generally charge competitors less than ten dollars to compete.¹⁰⁸ Promotion is based solely on accomplishment now, so the main form of exclusion is based on ability only—no one is promoted unless they win tournament competitions.¹⁰⁹ Women have faced a lot more resistance in the modern sport because of the fact that participation in a hard combat sport like *jūdō* violates many traditional gender roles.¹¹⁰ The first international women's competitions did not take place until the early 1980s, and that was only after years of labor by leaders of women's *jūdō* like Rusty Kanokogi.¹¹¹ Eventually, the IOC accepted female competition as a demonstration sport in 1988, and it was not until 1992 that women's *jūdō* became an official part of the Olympics.¹¹² Though there will always be work to do for the cause, it appears that *jūdō* has eliminated more inequality than most sports.

Third is specialization of roles. In a sport like *jūdō*, which pits one individual against another, this is somewhat difficult. While there can be no specialization *per se* in actual competition, there is an ever-widening gap between the fighting, teaching, and administrative spheres. This split was not present in the early years of the art, when high-ranking teachers, after years of practical fighting experience, would continue to promote the art as officials and administrators. Further specialization can be seen in the tendency for competitors to be "one throw" people. That is, they have one or two *tokui no waza* ("favorite moves") that they develop to the extreme (while ignoring much of the rest of the canon).

The fourth characteristic, rationalization, is clearly a major part of big-time *jūdō* competition. In addition to extensive cross-training in running, weight training, and European wrestling, the top *jūdō* champions work closely with sports scientists, doctors, and psychologists to become the "best of the best."

The fifth characteristic is bureaucratic organization. Though it has not been highlighted in this paper, there is extensive organization of sport *jūdō* at every level—from the smallest club up to the International Jūdō Federation.

108. Goodger and Goodger, "Light of Theory," 15.

109. Paul, *Social Significance*, 62.

100. Kanō, too, was resistant to women engaging in *randori*, but he strongly supported their study of *kata* and self-defense.

111. Barry McDermott, "Handle at Your Own Risk," *Sports Illustrated* LXIII (November 11, 1985): 55.

112. Gary Smith, "Rumbling With Rusty," *Sports Illustrated* LXIV (March 24, 1986): 70.

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No one can compete in the major competitions without authorization from regional and national administrative bodies.

Jūdō has probably been most resistant to quantification. Like boxing, there are few purely objective measures of a *jūdō* practitioner's skill (other than winning). So, the development of more point divisions and a greater emphasis on time seems to be about as much as possible.

Tied to the previous characteristic, the quest for records is also difficult to achieve in *jūdō*. Competition with another is the only way to determine skill, thus "records" might involve "the most consecutive wins" or "longest to hold an international title." However, this is a relative and floating scale. One has no way to know how the man who won the open-class division in 1964 would compare to the 1992 winner. As Draeger says:

To become a classical *dō*, a sport entity must drop all notions of competition and record-breaking, of immediate results for championships, of garnering group prestige, and concentrate upon the individual's self perfection as the end-point of training.¹¹³

The entire idea of the *dō* as formulated by Kanō and others, then, is antithetical to this last characteristic of modern sport. Yet it is clear that many *jūdō* practitioners are more than willing to leave the "Way" by the wayside in pursuit of championships and external rewards.

In the above overview of the development of *jūdō* from *jūjutsu* and into the modern sport, one can see a fairly clear pattern. As stated earlier, significant parallels can be drawn between the two practices, *jūjutsu* and sport *jūdō*. At opposite ends on the continuum of premodern to modern, the two represent the beginning and endpoint of an ideological and historical line (that appears to bend into a circle). The classical warrior resembles the elite athlete in his focus on practicality and his lack of interest in the "spirit" of the art. The top *jūdō* player of today shares many of the same attitudes concerning competition with his very distant technical forebears:

The athletic prowess of the samurai, as defined by swordsmanship, horsemanship, archery, and personal defense systems were unparalleled as a result of the intense work spent in training. In many ways, the samurai could be compared to the elite world-class athletes of today.¹¹⁴

Therefore, the concept of the *dō*, as created by Kanō in the late nineteenth century, seems to be an anomaly. The spiritual sublimation of the form, then, is a product of a unique time in the history of the art and of the world.

All this is not to say that *jūdō*, has completely abandoned the lofty goals of its founder. Still one hears leaders of *jūdō*, such as the president of the

113. Draeger, *Budo*, 125.

114. Thirer and Grabiner, "Self Actualization," 83.

Olympic *Jūdō* Committee, make reference to the deeper facets of the *jūdō* education:

It may be said that the well rounded physical, mental, and ethical perfection of human character is the goal of judo. a truth which Dr. Kanō never tired of repeating.¹¹⁵

If one compares this sort of philosophy to the theory of other Olympic sports, one will find that *jūdō* retains a lot of the old style, if not in the mainstream, at least in the periphery.

Apart from the vast legions of *jūdō* players interested only in rank and competition, there are a great many who reject the rampant modernization of the art for the “semi-modern” compromise that is the martial arts. Perhaps these people reject the socialization into Western team sports which stress aggressiveness and team spirit, in favor of the exotic martial arts which seem to be “above all that.”¹¹⁶ That is, while modern sports seek to overcome others, the martial arts work to overcome oneself. Even a champion international competitor like Yamashita Yasahiro seems to balk at the diminishing emphasis of the spirit in *jūdō* when he said, “I don’t want to be the kind of person who can’t do anything but judo. I want to study many things and expand my horizons.”¹¹⁷ We find in *jūdō*, then, a critical minority that wishes to cling to the original ideals of Dr. Kanō. Yet, these people are still just that—a minority:

True. there are still a few seekers of wisdom who immerse themselves in the spirit of judo or aikido, but the juggernaut of modern sports rolls on.¹¹⁸

Whether these philosophically minded “seekers of wisdom” will get crushed under the unstoppable wheels of modern sports or reclaim the driver’s seat in the coming years. remains to be seen.

115. Pyecha, “Physical Education.” 33.

116. One might think that the martial arts would promote more violence in practitioners. To the contrary, the traditional martial arts have been found to substantially *reduce* aggressive impulses (Nathaniel Allen. “The Way of the Warrior as a Way of Peace for Juvenile Delinquents.” unpublished). 2.

117. Kazuo Chūjō. “Yamashita Yasuhiro: Pride of Judo.” *Japan Quarterly* XXXII (October/December 198): 425.

118. Guttman, *Ball Game*, 181.