



# KOKORO

OUR 58<sup>TH</sup> YEAR

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Questions are an integral part of learning. They help me realize areas of study that require clarification. Here are more questions from BJJY members. Be aware that sometimes the questions and/or answers are edited to depersonalize them.

None of the question responses, opinions, or editorial content provide any legal or medical advice in any form or manner regardless of how qualified or experienced the author may be. Always consult a qualified attorney in your state if you need any type of legal advice or your physician for medical advice.

Also, the opinions expressed in any editorials are solely those of the editorial's author[s] and do not necessarily represent or reflect the views of the BJJY or its members individually or as a group.

**Q: I'm going to really drill down on those fixes [two throws] before the next exam. I showed my son the floating throw video from Purple Belt and told him that we'd both have to be really in sync for that one. With the winding throw, I'll be certain to remind him to kiai like you instructed on the video. I'll be super careful with the landing so his neck is safe. He's pretty fearless when it comes to break falls but it doesn't mean I don't worry about his safety. 031725**

**A: Regarding the karada makikomi [body winding throw]:**

There are two basic variations of the karada makikomi.

For the first one you wrap your right arm around his neck & do the karada makikomi. The downside for your uke with this variation is that you will land more diagonally across his chest which will usually result in a harder landing as he will land more on his back. As gravity works and you'll land

on top of him, he really needs to "kiai"!

The second variation is that your right arm goes over his right shoulder with his right shoulder ending up mostly/all in your armpit. This way all of your body weight will not be on the uke and he'll have a better chance of landing [on his side rather than flat on his back. This version also protects your right elbow from a harder impact with the ground and makes it easier to go into a submission [armbar or shoulderlock?].

*Regarding the uki-otoshi [floating drop throw]:*

You might want to go to <https://budoshin.com/training-testing/technical-helps/uki-otoshi/> for a written description of the learning process with pix. This is just one of a number of more effective "teaching" processes I've learned from my students over the years. Sometime really good/better ideas will come from your students & their worth their weight in gold. Be sure to give your students credit when they deserve it. It shows that you ARE a sensei.

**Q: Why have you gone back to written remarks on belt test exams rather than sending an audio file with your verbal comments? 032025**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

The May Zoom conference will be on Saturday, July 5, from 8-9:30AM.

If you'd like to participate please click [here](#). If you need help with a technique or two or have some topics you'd like us to discuss, please let me know.

# ORIGINS

by George Kirby



How many times have you heard the phrase from an “aspiring” martial arts instructor, “I invented a new martial art!”

Sorry sensei. It's time for a reality check. There are only so many

ways the human body & extremities can be moved. This includes movements that can be injurious or even fatal.

On top of that there are only a limited number of ways to control and direct an attacker's/opponent's movements or disable them with injuries.

Reality check: Notwithstanding “rules of combat” for safety reasons in competitions, everything you probably “discovered” or uniquely combined probably has been in existence, in some form or manner since the beginning of the human race. Simply said, there are limits. This applies to the more traditional martial arts [such as jujitsu, judo, aikido, karate, kung/gung-fu, hapkido, or Greco-Roman wrestling to name a few] or more “modern creations [such as krav-maga, Brazilian jujitsu, mixed martial arts, etc.]

Reality check: If there are 50 core techniques/movements in traditional Jujitsu, based on a statistical formula that equals about 19,600 combinations. Not all of them may be realistic or workable/effective, but the insanely high number of combinations can be applied to any valid martial art. Is there an overlap into other martial arts? Yes. Even into your “new martial art”? Probably “yes” as well.

Even my Budoshin Jujitsu Densho, which contains almost all that I learned from Sensei Jack Seki and Sensei Hal Brosious, has only 870 techniques and variations.

I've only scraped the surface in my book [no pun intended].

So, where does this leave you? As long as you realize that you're not inventing the wheel, you can call your “new” martial art whatever you want as long as you recognize its limitations. As long as what you are teaching has a logical learning sequence & reasonable objectives, you can hopefully teach it to others to your heart's content. And as long as no one can effectively challenge its validity in a real street situation, your art may have validity. Even more importantly, will your art continue after your “retirement” and/or passing?

However, at some point the “metal hits the pedal”. From past observation there are some martial arts ryu [styles] that can perform perfect forms [kata], but put them in a continuous random attack situation and they can't fight their way out of a wet paper bag. So a martial art can look “pretty” or work very well in a competitive arena, but be totally worthless on the street.

There is another objective of this essay though. We can point out our different martial arts & ryu, which in all fairness, all have strengths and weaknesses. Or we can look at the commonalities. Some people do better with one martial art over another for a variety of reasons including their physical stature, philosophy, or perceived need. Some people will learn a particular martial art because it's the only school within a reasonable distance.

However, I am talking about commonalities within the martial arts. Although most martial arts are distinctive in what they teach, if you stick around long enough and look at other martial arts you'll find that your system and another system have some common movements and/or techniques. It's inevitable because “no man is an island” and neither is a martial art. We all move the same way.

So, have you “invented” a new martial art? I seriously doubt it. You may have selected techniques from established martial arts to create your own system, but that isn't a “new” martial art. Every technique, hold, grip, pin, strike, nerve/pressure point attack has an original source— a.k.a. “origin”. Even traditional jujitsu, which “originated” in Japan, has its source from China which probably picked up elements from India. And traditional Jujitsu has also evolved to



meet the adversarial conditions of today.

So, regardless of flow charts, and “written” historical records, the actual origin of a particular martial art within unique techniques not previously in existence, probably doesn’t exist. We may come up with a particular time, place, and person, to whom an art or ryu can be “credited to” and accept that as the “origin” of the particular martial art or ryu, but that’s the way history is. It isn’t neat and clean although we’d like it to be so.

So we make a decision and call it the “origin” of something. But does that “make it so”? *[See my brief wish for 2025 at the end of last December’s issue of Kokoro.]*

On the third hand, if you come up with a unique combination of techniques from a particular martial art and want to call it a particular ryu [or style] that’s probably a more legitimate approach. But again the issue will be “does it have legs”? Will it be taught beyond the confines of your dojo and hopefully after you have passed on the great tatami up in the sky.

Reality check: be aware that calling what your teaching is a new “ryu”, it really isn’t. All you’re doing is probably combining certain techniques from a martial art or arts you already know and putting them together in a way that works for you— - and will hopefully work for others. All you’re really doing is “reorganizing” what you’ve previously learned. There’s nothing wrong with that as long as your honest with yourself and your students.

Just be careful what you call your ryu.  
Example: Decades ago I wrote an article for Black Belt in which there was an elbow-dislocation submission which I facetiously called “chi-ken-wing” because it was a good visualization of how a chicken wing might be taken apart to eat the meat. Surprisingly, I got a letter from a sensei stating the Chi Ken Wing was the name of a particular ryu of a known martial art.

So, before you name your ryu or techniques, research your names to avoid a possibly embarrassing learning experience.

A: I’ve gone back to written comments rather than an “audio” evaluation as1] it forces me to be more specific in my comments due to limited space and 2] a written evaluation is probably easier and faster for you to go through than listening to a recorded audio evaluation.

**Q: On my last belt exam you wrote the following general comment on the waza section “If you do well on the kata portion the waza portion is a no-brainer” is essentially true. It allows a person with belt-level [or higher] competency to raise their score as they generally use techniques they’re better at.” Is this really true? 052025**

A: I’d have to say yes. If you’re given free reign to answer a question, you’ll usually use the best answer you know . . . and if you have a really solid answer & can explain yourself well, the question is essentially a “no brainer” as it allows you to present a really solid answer with little effort on your part.

**Q: Question about the relationship of seoi nage to o goshi. It was time for a trip to Pensacola for annual judo coach/sensei required training. It's death by power point to cover liability and teaching theory. Then a practical on the mat where everyone must teach a specific technique to a panel of 6Ds.**

Among the topics covered were the two throws above. At the end, the demonstrated the shoulder throw. Got my A=, so I thought that I was out of the woods when one of examiners asked a question to the group: after seeing the two throws demonstrated, is there anyone here that clearly cannot see the the two throws are entirely different throws.

I disagreed-- I said to Kano they were because he saw one as a hip technique and the other as a arm technique. Based on having trained in kito-ryu to sandan, I thought that it was fair to that in jujitsu o goshi is taught before seoi nage because the hands are supported by the underlying base and power plant provided by the hips. That, as per, kito-ryu made seoi nage a koshi nage,

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and we don't pretend that a hip throw with a grip around the neck is a hand throw vice a hip throw, so I believe that Kano was somewhat inconsistent (unless he wanted to call that koshi garuma, but that has a different action with the hips).

**This to me seems like Kano-ryu might be jj while judo appears more whimsical in their science. Your thoughts? 032325**

A: Transliterations are such a challenge.

First, let's deal with the phonetics. If you say "koshi nage" the kanji/word comes out as a "k" sound at the start. If the "k" starts a word, such as "koshi", but it's anywhere else in the name of a throw, the resulting proper sound is a "g". So, the transliteration for an outside sweeping hip throw would be harai goshi [unless it's called koshi harai] To my understanding, an "o" in front of goshi, such as "o-goshi" would mean major or "big" [whatever big means in this context].

Ippon seoi [or seoi] nage would be one of several kinds of koshi nage, all of which have the uke going over the tori's hip. There are also variations of ippon seoi nage, morote seoi nage,

etc.. All of which could be classified under koshi nage.

Similarly, one could discuss "otoshi" [drop throw] in the same manner, but you're ideally dropping down to the center of you're uke's base, regardless of what the rest of your arms, hands, or body are doing to support the execution of the otoshi.

This type of argument could go on endlessly depending on what core technique you want to start from.

To add to the "tower of babel", different ryu have different names for the same techniques or the same names for different techniques.

Life sure would've been easier if the whole world had started out with the same alphabet. [It was through you that I recently learned that the Cyrillic alphabet does not have a "J" sounding character. So, they combined their "z" and "h" sounding characters into "zh", which creates the "j" sound; thus you have Zhu-zhitsu, etc.

So, to address your concern, koshi and goshi are the same word in Japanese to my low level of Japanese kanji knowledge. The "o", if added, simply

means major or big. As there are many koshi nage, there are many ogoshi withing the core koshi variations, as the difference is mainly where the placement of the word "koshi" is in the name of the term. As ippon seoi nage [of which there are several variations] is a variation of koshi nage, to my mind it could also be classified as an ogoshi.

Hope I'm making sense. 😊

Q: Do the more traditional martial arts [judo, karate, hapkido, aikido, jujitsu, etc.] or the modern ones [Brazilian Jiu-jitsu, MMA, etc.] really teach you self defense? 032425

A: That's entirely up to your sensei and the ryu [style] of the art you're learning. Yes, you can learn kata [forms or techniques] that you could use against street attacks in all of these martial arts

But none of those skills are really useful or effective unless you also get practice in the dojo in dealing with random &/or continuous attacks for 30-60 seconds. Your technique execution quality may suffer in these situations but, if you get enough of this kind of training you will be more effectively be able to respond to random unanticipated attacks.

Learning and becoming reasonably proficient in this self-defense skill does take practice. But I've never known anyone who gets worse at it.

Q: I think that you are almost exactly hitting the same points that I did.

I believe that their argument is that seoi nage can't be koshi nage because had a specific set of techniques in koshi nage, and seoi nage is not in it since it is an arm/hand technique.

To me that seems to me to say that to "pass" tests on Kodokan judo (in the US) that I have to follow a dogma that groups techniques by classification/terminology that may be inaccurate or obsolete. What you and I are saying pre-existed judo in ju-jitsu-- including in kito-ryu, a source for Kano.

As I recall, early editions of Webster's Dictionary suffered after the Revolutionary War because he wanted to highlight American English as distinct from British English. That meant that if there was an obscure local use of a word as opposed to how the word was normally used, then he listed that as the primary American English

usage for his Dictionary. That must have driven school kids crazy. He wasn't alone: we have both Charles Town WVA vs. Charleston SC where Webster would have said SC was proper American as on this side of the Atlantic, "ton" was the American way of saying "town". Then again, he probably didn't care that Angles and Saxons also had "tons".

Early judoka had trouble with Kano's terminology for judo for two reasons:

1. He separated techniques by concepts instead of by biomechanics. To a Russian it made no sense if in applying deashi barai, I have to convert to a sacrifice fall to seal the deal. To them, that was a variant of the throw without a need to jump over to sutemi waza (which to them is also flawed for not including knee drop variants.
2. They believed that his classifications were too exclusive-- in other words instead of calling koshi nage hip throws, they would techniques employing hips to a large extent. Seoi nage does used the arms to swing the hips into position to rotate uke around and over, but with just hands alone, there would be no seoi nage.

I think in the end that I was just surprised that two high level judoka made a flat statement that those were two entirely different throws simply because they are in different classifications. Many an yama arashi has had to swap to taiotoshi on the fly, so Russians would call them variants of each other, but I can recognize that in the former uke is thrown over a leg (which remains in the air, whereas in the latter, uke rotates around a leg set on the ground. I understand the distinction, but I would fret over the practicality of the distinction if it prevented someone from not flowing from one into the other.

In any case, you've provided the sanity check, so as always, thank you. 032525

A: I think the literal translation of ippon seoi nage is one arm sleeve throw, of which, if you want to be really picky, there are many. However, if, in the process of controlling/trapping the arm and thus the body, so that you can bring your hip in and set-up/execute a hip throw, you are, in fact, doing a koshi nage as the actual throw. Therefore [? 😊] an ippon seoi nage is a koshi nage in this case. You could do the same thing with a tai-otoshi - - ippon otoshi.



# *Ju-Jitsu is Ju-Jutsu is Judo is Kendo...*

by Scott Anderson, 7<sup>th</sup> dan Jujitsu,  
4<sup>th</sup> dan Judo & Sambo



*Ryū (流, mainly used as a suffix, meaning style, type, form, manner, system, school... used here in the sense of ryūha (流派, a school or a school of thought is a Japanese term referring to any discipline.*

*. [Wikipedia](#)*

*Zen Master Linji, founder of the Rinzaï sect*

Zen perceives the world as it is in our finite slice of time called “here and now”. The past was; the future may be. We are now, or so we think. Without preconceptions and illusions, armed only with mindful training can we see both reality and combat as a series of events centered around a *jujitsuka* where we react/act correctly in time and space to survive or not.

We do not live in the *samurai*’s Japan. Should that change *ju-jitsu*? Is the American Ju-Jitsu Association’s “*ju-jitsu*” the same if we practice *Budoshin*, or if we are from another *ryu* within the AJA studying to standards conforming to Professor Kirby’s books?

The AJA exists for affiliated *dojos* “to cooperate and interact to promote the generous exchange of resources, ideas, information, and the technical skills of *ju-jitsu*” intending to: “maintain high standards of the martial art of *ju-jitsu* and provide for the orderly promotion of qualified persons within the American Ju-jitsu Association”.

Standards tell *ju-jitsu* from not *ju-jitsu* regardless of those who change labels like others swap *zori*.

In the 1990s, Russian Martial Arts entered a world stage, and they spoke of styles avoiding the word *ryu* in favor of “flavors”. Quaint and playful, this becomes another rabbit hole. Is *hakko-ryu* chocolate but *Yoshitsune* dark chocolate or

chocolate lite? The same could be said with *Budoshin* being vanilla but the flavor for the AJA standard being vanilla lite, but is that fair? Is it lite because something that is *Budoshin* is not forwarded into this standard, or is it French vanilla because it is *Budoshin* with “ingredients” from other *ryu*?

Whatever I train in is flavored because I have studied folkstyle and freestyle wrestling, Greco-Roman, *judo*, SAMBO: sport and combat, KAPAP, *aikido*, *kito-ryu*, the USJA *ju-jitsu* system, a smattering of *Yoshitsune*, and yes, everything that goes with the AJA with a glop of *Budoshin*. Good? Bad?

I wanted to study an *aikido ryu*, but the *soke* said that his *dojo* was only an *aikido dojo*. Roughly quoting him, “my background was too diverse for either of us to be comfortable with me training there”. My next 20 months were in KAPAP. My path forwarded either way.

*Shoshin*, an open-minded Zen state for learning where while we might be ignorant, we are far from stupid—it seems useful here.

US college wrestlers compete under NCAA rules learning credible skills, and they can compete in the Olympics under international wrestling rules very different from our folkstyle. These wrestlers often move to martial arts quite successfully. They are not *jujitsuka*, but if the rules are amenable, they can compete successfully in *ju-jitsu* competitions. Does competitive proficiency equal theoretical knowledge?

Wrestling is a blender for different regional trends and specific wrestling styles for individuals that enter the system. Each of the colleges can have very different wrestling styles and systems that can be fascinating to watch as they meet under the rules of engagement. In the past, many regions within the US had differing approaches to wrestling based upon the styles of incoming immigrants, but NCAA rules have blended and smoothed these differences into a recognizable folkstyle of today.

The Soviets used common rules to allow the various ethnic wrestling styles in the USSR to compete on a level playing field to observe and cull techniques for a more universal wrestling style—at least until SAMBO broke away. There, many of the ethnic traditional styles survive, but they have evolved based upon exposure to those other styles.

If these differences are “flavors” we wind back



to “*ryus*”, yet westerners are happy to just call these participants wrestlers—although, there are always those who want you to know exactly what school that they wrestled for.

We hear that *aikido* came from *daito-ryu* (among others), *judo* came from *kito-ryu* (among others), or *kito-ryu* is about balance and timing vs. power, or *hakko-ryu* prefers to unbalance through joint locking. These thumbnail sketches are misleading because something unique in a *ryu* often fails to note how much they have in common—hence the term *ju-jitsu*. That someone studied *nihon-ryu* does not mean not studying *ju-jitsu*.

“Here and now”, to be *ju-jitsu* requires a yardstick. Is *judo* still a *ryu* of *ju-jitsu*? Is *aikido*? We could say “no” or “yes” based on what they exclude vs. any philosophical underpinnings. Is there a proper percentage of core techniques?

Early on, I studied at an AJA dojo once a week, and at a *kito-ryu* dojo three or four times a week. I couldn’t see differences. In testing, there was much in common with scant differences.

My *kito-ryu* *sensei* did not support philosophical discussions. For him, principles were embedded in techniques and tactics, so they were osmotic through imitation and repetition. That left us with *ju-jitsu* as a list of common techniques. A student transferred in from Maine where he studied *judo* and *ju-jitsu* from a *sensei* there. He was a brown belt, and one day someone asked him to demonstrate *morote seoinage*. He performed as expected, and then asked if he should also perform the *ju-jitsu* variant.

He then proceeded to pull *uke*’s lapel up and out of his belt, stepped way back, and then entered into the throw using the extra slack in the jacket for leverage and lift. Someone asked him why that was the *ju-jitsu* version. He responded, “that’s what *sensei* said”.

Among Russian self-defense systems, there can be several systems seeming like SAMBO, but aren’t. When experts designed systems based on *ju-jitsu*, boxing, or wrestling, to ensure their comprehensiveness, they were required to have core techniques. These core techniques were taught to school teachers, civil servants, taxi drivers, tax collectors, etc.

These techniques ensured that a boxer being strangled from behind could fight back when no such techniques were illegal or existing in the sport. These techniques were the yardstick for self-defense; however, any useful variant could be folded back into the self-defense recipe. Is a *ryu* flexible enough to be

a living system, or just a dogmatic expression of *ju-jitsu* vice a true path for Zen or profit?

To me, *Budoshin* was intended as a self-regulating yardstick but not as a *ryu*. It may be a “universal” *ju-jitsu* pulling away from any prejudices cloaked in *ryu*, and that its intent and discipline in maintaining that path may lead to an irony where *Budoshin* can be considered a *ryu*, but that does not leave the AJA testing standards as the benchmark for *Budoshin*.

What I think that we can say is that the AJA was the brainchild of two practitioners of *Budoshin* who wanted a support group for all *ju-jitsuka*. They did not declare *Budoshin* as the yardstick for the organization, and today, only about a third of the AJA membership is *Budoshin*. That membrane is only penetrated when members of other *ryu* wish to cross-certify into *Budoshin*. The integrity of the member *ryus* remains sacrosanct.

The AJA path has its foundation augmented or degraded by external material that does not cleave specifically to *Budoshin*. There is a plethora of *ju-jitsu* among us, but it may take a *Budoshin* within us to sort it out for our use and improvement. That does not exclude other “yardsticks”.

The opening Zen quotation warns against fixating on the Buddha instead of Buddhism. If one introduces himself as the Buddha, he cannot be the Buddha-- just a chimera of vanity. The lesson underlying this is to avoid complacent thinking—dogma. In Zen, practicing good deeds is better than reading and thinking about good deeds.

*Budoshin* claims to be only *ju-jitsu* while any *ryu* implies it is more than *ju-jitsu* when in fact, it is just *ju-jitsu*. In many cases, a *ryu* is just the slant of a student who became a master on the *jujitsu* that he learned. In this here and now, *Budoshin* is less a holy grail, and more a Rosetta stone translating a path for those *ronin* who have lost their instructors and their progress.



There are a variety of grabs, holds, traps, etc., used to set up almost any/every koshi nage.

Or even more specifically, ippon [one-point] seoi [sleeve] nage [throw].

BTW, do you know how to do an ippon seoi nage if your uke is not wearing a gi top - or any type of sleeve or shirt? If your ude does not have a sleeve to grab onto or trap, would it then be called a ippon ude nage? [Seki even taught us how to combine a ten age [kote gaeshi] with a koshi nage. Unfortunately, completing the technique would dislocate the attacker's elbow in the process of executing the koshi nage. So we were allowed to practice it in form only [kime-no-kata]. [There are simply some technique combinations you can't complete that Seki taught [without serious injury to your uke.]

Here's a story that might relate. There was an American businessman who was talking to a group of Japanese businessmen. Every time he'd finish a statement they'd all say, "Hai!". Thinking they agreed with his proposals he asked if they approved his proposal, to which they all replied, "No!" This confused the American until he asked for an explanation since the Japanese responded with a "hai" to every statement he made. They responded that "hai" meant that they understood what he was saying, not necessarily agreeing with him.

Need I say anything more?

It's sort of like saying "shalom" [Hebrew word for peace]. But it can have many other colloquial meanings depending on context.

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### MY APOLOGIES . . .

For any design glitches in this issue. I'm still trying to master doing a newsletter in MS Word in the same format as MS Publisher. It's still a challenge. But I hope the process will smooth out in time.