

A BRIEF HISTORY AND APPRAISAL OF KODOKAN GOSHIN JUTSU

The term *Goshin Jutsu* translates directly as Body Defence Art or more colloquially as Self Defence Techniques.

The *Kodokan* committee set up to produce the *Goshin Jutsu* began work in September 1952 and was led by Nagaoka, Mifune and Samura *Sensei* and included Oda, Kurihara, Nakano, Ara, Ito, Ebii, Kawakami, Kikuchi, Kazuzo, Koyasu, Sawa, Suzuki, Takahashi Kisaburo, Takahashi Hamakichi, Nagahata, and Otaki *Sensei*. The influence of Nagaoka *Sensei* was however an indirect one because he died in November of that year but his earlier contribution to the development of *Kime no Kata* was important in the establishment of the more modern *Goshin Jutsu*. There were at least 25 members on the committee but it varied in size over the three years that it took to complete the task. One of the most well known names from that group is Kenji Tomiki *Sensei* who along with Otaki *Sensei* went on to give the first public demonstration of the *Kodokan Goshin Jutsu* at the *Budokan* in 1956 and later established *Shodokan Aikido*, more commonly known as *Tomiki Aikido* in 1967. Other *Sensei* who were part of the committee and who went on to be household names in *Judo* were Kotani and Kudo *Sensei*.

The *Kodokan Goshin Jutsu* is not called *Kodokan Goshin Jutsu no Kata* in the same way as we have *Nage no Kata*, *Katame no Kata*, *Ju no Kata* and *Kime no Kata* etc. This would imply that the *Kodokan* did not initially intend that it be a *kata* but rather a collection of self defence techniques grouped together to represent defences against several kinds of attack which were more contemporary than some of the *Kime no Kata*. It is however now ranked among the official *Kodokan Kata* although some traditionalists believe that Jigoro Kano *Shihan* would not have included it in his system because it doesn't contain any of the higher ideals which were so important to him and which he incorporated into the other *Kata*. The influence of Tomiki *Sensei* can be seen in the predominance of techniques which we would usually associate with *Aikido* and as Jigoro Kano described *Aikido* as the "Ideal *Budo*" this would lead us to believe that he might have been quite happy with including *Goshin Jutsu* in his *Kodokan Judo* syllabus.

There are those of course who do not rate the techniques in the *Kata* as being useful for self defence but they are failing to see beyond the demonstration facet of the *Kata* in a similar way as those who regard the *Nage no Kata* and *Katame no Kata* as being irrelevant to competitive *Judo*. They have probably only seen the *Kata* in its demonstration form and have never used it to develop self defence skills. The first public demonstration of the *Goshin Jutsu* presented it as it was intended, a self defence system devoid of most of the trappings associated with *Kata* and as such it was a performance with little aesthetic value but no one who has seen it can doubt its effectiveness.

The *Goshin Jutsu* was meant to supplement and complement the *waza* in the *Kime no Kata*, *Kime Shiki*, *Ju no Kata*, *Koshiki no Kata* and *Goshin Ho* increasing the number of defence techniques available to the *Judoka* to allow him to deal

with a variety of life threatening situations. These defences could be interchanged as suggested by John Cornish in his 1984 booklet on the *Kata* and this would further increase the repertoire of possible responses.

Another criticism of *Goshin Jutsu* is that the gun defences are not very effective and this is borne out by an experiment carried out by the Tokyo Police with a pellet gun in which they found that in 90% of the cases the defender would have been shot while trying to execute the defence. I think that anyone who is faced with a gunman determined to shoot them will probably get shot. However I think that it was Kyuzo Mifune *Sensei* who said "these methods are techniques of the last resort" and as such they should not be viewed as some miracle device certain to disarm the gunman safely. He is also reported as having said that you should look into the eyes of your assailant and determine if he has the will to shoot. If he has and his concentration wavers then you should attack first.

Mental training in the form of *Mushin* (a mind free from anger, fear and ego and open to everything). It is often translated as no-mindedness, and *Zanshin* (the mind that maintains awareness in case of further attacks), would come as the *Judoka* became more efficient in the execution of the various *waza* and began to use them against random attacks instead of the attacks coming in a specified order as they do in the *Kata*. Another extension could be the use of the defences against attacks coming randomly in quick succession from different assailants approaching from different angles.

Ideally all *Judoka* should undertake to gain proficiency in *Kodokan Goshin Jutsu* to help move their *Judo* from what Jigoro Kano *Shihan* described as “narrow” *Judo* or totally competitive *Judo* to “wider” *Judo* or *Jodan Judo* which is more encompassing and a truer reflection of the art he developed. Admittedly the competitive *judoka* will have developed skills such as speed, balance, timing and strength along with the ability to sense any weakness in his/her opponent’s balance, however he/she will only be familiar with attacks launched from the closest of *Ma-ai* whereas with training in the *Goshin Jutsu*, not only will he/she gain proficiency with a variety of *Atemi-waza* and *Kansetsu-waza* not seen in *Shiai* but he/she will be exposed to a variety of *Ma-ai* peculiar to each group of attacks.

The *Reigi* or etiquette in this *Kata* is less formal than that employed in the earlier *Kata* created by Kano *Shihan* perhaps reflecting its more contemporary and utilitarian nature.

The *Kata* consists of 21 *Waza* broadly divided into two sections; 12 *Toshi no Bu* or unarmed attacks and 9 *Buki no Bu* which are attacks with three weapons. The *Toshi no Bu* are further divided into 7 *Kumitsukaretabai* or attacks when held and 5 *Hanaretabai* which are attacks at a distance. The *Buki no Bu* consist of three defences each against *Tanto no Bai* (Knife attacks) *Tsue no Bai* (stick attacks) and *Kenshu no bai* or pistol attacks.

The *Kata* extends the standard *Judo* curriculum by including wristlocks while excluding neck and leg locks. This is a measure of Kano *Shihan*’s regard for *Aikido* because it was true to its principles and avoided the overuse of strength. The *kata* includes *Aikido waza* such as *Ikkyo* (similar to *Ude Gatame*), *Kote Gaeshi* and *Kote Hineri* (wrist twists), which could be applied effectively after a relatively short period of time unlike most *Judo Nagewaza* which would take the student quite a while to become proficient enough to be able to use them confidently.

In BJA, EJU or IJF *Kata* competitions, the standard against which all *Kata* are judged is the *Kodokan* DVD series supplemented by a list of rules issued by the IJF. As in all events which are judged in this way, such as gymnastics and ice skating, despite the guidelines there is a fair degree of discrepancy between the judges and competing *Judoka* in relation to their interpretation of these criteria. This is a fact of life and although as competitors we can moan about the lack of consistency, the reality is that *kata* was not devised to be competitive and the difficulties experienced in judging are in no small way due to it having that role imposed upon it.

Almost as much time has elapsed since the *Goshin Jutsu* was devised until the present day as there had been from when the *Kime no Kata* was established until the *Kodokan* decided that a more modern self defence system was required. Some people now believe that the *Goshin Jutsu* is now an anachronism in the same way as *Kime no Kata* was thought as obsolete in 1956. Certainly guns, knives and sticks still exist as threats but other weapons such as clubs, bottles, chains, nunchaku, pepper sprays and tasers also have to be contended with in the 21st century. *Judo* has a limit to what it can achieve in terms of defence against weapons and while it is possible that an attacker with any weapon may be subdued if he makes a mistake, the margin for error is very restricted and damage could still be inflicted even if a direct hit with the weapon is avoided.

This is not however a valid reason for abandoning *Goshin Jutsu* as a method of self defence. The various defences within this and the other *Kata* previously mentioned, while not all encompassing as a self defence system certainly leave someone who has practiced them richer in terms of *Judo* knowledge, more complete as a *Judoka* and most important of all safer on the street.

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October 2010

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Suitable for Revalidation for Instructors, Coaches, Examiners, Referees and Officials

GOSHIN-JUTSU TECHNIQUES (A ROUGH GUIDE)

Ryote-dori (two-hand hold)



Hidari-eri-dori (left-lapel hold)



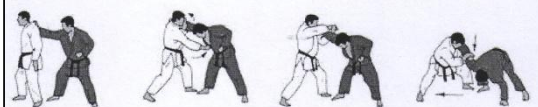
Migi-eri-dori (right-lapel hold)



Kataude-dori (single-hand hold)



Ushiro-eri-dori (collar hold from behind)



Ushiro-jime (choke from behind)



Kakae-dori (seize and hold from behind)



Naname-uchi (slanting strike)



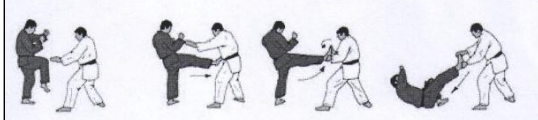
Ago-tsuki (uppercut)



Gammen-tsuki (thrust-punch to face)



Mae-geri (front kick)



Yoko-geri (side kick)



Tsukkake (knife thrust)



Choku-zuki (straight thrust with knife)



Naname-zuki (slanting stab with knife)



Furiage (upswing with stick)



Furioroshi (downswing with stick)



Morote-zuki (two-hand thrust with stick)



Shomen-zuke (handgun at the abdomen)



Doshi-gamae (handgun Held at the side)



Haimen-zuke (handgun against the back)

