

# The World of ASP



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The American Self-Protection Association Newsletter

Editor: Gary A. Cook Associate Editor: Nellie Baltazzi President and Technical Director of the American Self-Protection Association: Professor  
Evan S. Baltazzi

## ON "MARTIAL" ARTS. FACTS AND FALLACIES.

By Evan S. Baltazzi

A book published by the JAPANESE CENTER FOR RESEARCH ON ANCESTRAL MARTIAL TECHNIQUES under the authorship of Fujita Saiko with the title SECRET VITAL POINTS OF THE HUMAN BODY, claims to be a complete study of the physical and physiological aspects of the many vital points used for atemis (blows) by the various martial arts schools (ryu). Twenty-seven ryus are listed under a variety of names, starting with the #1 Seishin (Pure Heart) school and ending with the # 27 Shorinji (Temple of the Small Forest) school. Interestingly enough the #15 school is the Kodokan (the original judo school of Kano Jigoro, p.23).

This bears out the statements by several Japanese judoka visiting the French College of Black Belts at the

time I was studying judo with the Kawaishi method. All said that there were **no bona fide**, standardized, jujitsu ranks and **no** rank equivalence among schools.

The first book published on judo toward the tail-end of the last century bears the title: A COMPLETE TREATISE OF JUJITSU. THE KANO METHOD. Judo was an attempt by Kano Jigoro to unify the techniques of the various ryus and create also a sport that could be practiced with a degree of safety. Its source and beginnings were in jujitsu.

This explains why our judo training at the time, included a well-rounded jujitsu program as part of the requirements for the shodan in **judo**. It becomes clear, also, that the term **jujitsu** is generic (in etymology as well) and does not apply exclusively to any specifically defined method or school. There are considerable differences among jujitsu schools. Some favor hitting and kicking to such degree that

one cannot tell them apart from karate or tae-kwon-do. Others bear striking resemblance to judo, while others, some going under the generic name of aikijitsu, favor twisting techniques on major joints. Certain styles of jujitsu, use sticks, cutting weapons and thrown objects.

Kano, being far better educated than the other heads of jujitsu ryus claimed the term **judo** (which, by the way, existed already) as his own and obtained legal protection for his method and the judo name.

In latter years Ueshiba Morihei did the same with **aikido**. Under the Japanese legal system the inheritance of such names is like a copyright that remains the property of the family and heirs of the originator and is protected by law and custom. This protection gave unity and official standing to judo and aikido. For judo it helped its expansion outside Japan and the organization of *bona fide* championships, where the title of champion is meaningful.

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Initially there were no weight categories. However, when the Japanese found themselves at a disadvantage of weight and power against the *geijins* (foreigners) then weight categories were adopted. Dangerous techniques, such as neck and leg locks, initially part and parcel of judo, were eliminated, as well as certain throws for obvious safety reasons.

At first all dan ranks were awarded by the Kodokan, which held this privilege as long as possible. Then, with the advent of an international judo federation, dans were awarded nationally with the interdiction of one awarding rank to citizens of another nation. This rule was adopted to stop many excesses and questionable practices. Central national organizations were created and recognized so that only their members could compete internationally. The admission of judo as an Olympic sport, gave it even greater status. Thus, one can now refer to *bona fide* judo ranks and champions.

In spite efforts by some, aikido has resisted the temptation of competition. Its ranks are awarded in Japan, by the Hombu, Morihei's original

school, now run by his son Kishomaru, and by a few other schools, such as the Yoshinkai and the Yoseikan authorized by the Hombu.

Tohei Koichi, Hombu's star and Ueshiba Morihei's protege', was pushed out after the latter's death, and since he cannot legally use the term aikido in Japan, he created kido, which is aikido by another name, and awarded himself a tenth dan.

This is one of the many examples of the highly political structure of all martial arts, fueled by greed and vainglory.

Aikijitsu is a term as generic as jujitsu, in etymology and otherwise used only to make it sound different. One is hard put to find any meaningful differences between it and the numerous jujitsu schools. The differences, if any, lie in personalities and financial interests.

It is worth mentioning that many phony "World Championships" are organized by clever promoters. Their "World" is represented by citizens (almost always professionals or in the way of becoming such), of a handful of nations, who hope to monetize as much as possible on titles such as "World Champion" in this or that art or event.

I have tried to bring a unified approach to all

combative arts and now that the main line A.S.P. (or ASP) is firmly established in its method and system, I, am with the help of my students, tackling individual arts with the same method, while respecting their individuality and integrity. Aikido, jujitsu (aikijitsu being a hybrid), tai chi chuan are the first for which we have developed a balanced technique selection for an A.S.P. approach.

Only the future will tell if the A.S.P. system and method, the validity of which is recognized by educators of stature, will overcome the martial arts' hype, media blitz, and special interests, to establish itself as a uniquely efficient, unified approach to combative knowledge.

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#### **ON AIKIDO (A.S.P.) AND KI by Troy L. Schultz**

At the heart of all basic elements of motion is the vital force concept known to the Chinese as chi and to the Japanese as ki. Years ago when I was first introduced to this concept it was shrouded in mystery. This may have been due to the way it was taught, or perhaps to the fact that my instructors did not have a good understanding of it. Often it was described as a mysterious force which gave a person superhuman abilities. The hype of many bad "martial arts" movies did not help my

understanding either! As a scientist I was not satisfied with the "scientific" explanations given which explanations made ki even more suspect to me.

Drawing on my own experience, I thought that a discussion of this topic might be helpful in clearing up some misunderstandings. Ki or chi may be described, as Dr. Baltazzi has often pointed out in his lectures, as mind-body coordination and this is not an exclusively oriental concept. The seat of ki is believed to be in our center of gravity, known in the Japanese literature as the **one point**, sometimes also called **hara**, which coincides with our body's center of gravity. It is situated a couple of inches below the navel and a few inches deep, depending on one's morphology. To sense ki, mentally let your weight "settle" there and shift your weight from one foot to the other. As you move the vertical projection of the **one point** shifts to the center point of balance. When mind and body focus on that center, one can achieve his maximum potential. Ki or chi is to be understood as a vital force different from the life force. Whatever the name, the net result is the coordination of mind and body.

All of us use ki in our everyday activities whether we are aware of it or not. Some

people learn to use it more efficiently than others, such as a mover who learns to lift objects safely and efficiently, or a dancer who learns to move gracefully. In terms of combative skills, ki manifests itself in the efficient use of the five universal principles which govern them. These are: **DISTANCE, DIRECTION, TIMING, ENERGY TRANSFER, AND LEVERAGE** and have been described in detail in Dr. Baltazzi's works.

Aikido (A.S.P.) has several ways to demonstrate the use of ki in techniques. People tend to be more impressed by demonstrations involving leverage and changes in direction than by those emphasizing the other principles. I believe this is due to the complex nature of our bodies and the many ways we can turn, pivot, and use our joints. No one would be surprised to see a rock pried out of the ground with the use of a lever, yet most people do not understand that the same principle is involved when I simply raise my arm.

Another example of the application of the ki is the so-called **unbendable arm** which is described in many aikido texts. Briefly, one person extends his arm and focuses on his muscles to prevent another person from bending it using both hands. One has to be

very strong to resist with one arm against another person's two.

Now, I stand relaxed, well balanced, knees slightly bent, I take a deep breath, and focus on my center of gravity, letting mentally my weight settle there. Extending my arm as if reaching for an object just beyond my finger tips, I let the other person try to bend it. I remain relaxed, disregarding his attempt, while mentally I am continuously reaching for that object just beyond my fingertips. Bending my arm now becomes considerably more difficult for my attacker. Why? Simply because my efforts were mentally and physically coordinated and relaxation played a pivotal role in this coordination.

A.S.P., a well recognized method for developing motion skills, puts a lot of emphasis on relaxation not only in its main body, but also in aikido (ASP), and t'ai chi chuan (ASP), both of which use the concept of ki or chi. Whatever the name, it simply means mind-body coordination.

In conclusion, ki is not a superhuman force, but a natural way for maximizing human potential. Through the practice of aikido (A.S.P.) we learn not only to maximize ki for self-defense, but also in our daily lives. A person who has developed a strong ki projects it in everything he does.

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**MEMBERSHIP NEWS**

During the meeting of January '96, the A.S.P.A. Board of Directors unanimously decided to abandon life membership in its present form. It will be available to members only after twenty years of continuous membership, in consideration of outstanding contributions. This decision is not retroactive for existing active life members.

A.S.P. IS YOUNG AND NEEDS PROTECTION, this is why we require current annual membership for rank validation. Anyone who has not paid his/her dues for two years loses automatically his rank.

If, however, he has a valid reason why he cannot pay his dues, he may request a demit by applying to the Board of Directors. If approved, this demit will allow him to retain his rank for an indefinite period without paying dues. He could reclaim his dormant rank upon becoming active again.

Any life member who has not been active for seven years should also apply for a demit if he wishes to preserve his rank. Application for a demit shows at least some continuing interest in A.S.P.

**THERE WILL BE NO FURTHER NOTIFICATION**

**ON THIS MATTER.**

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ANNUAL DUES ARE: \$20.00 for Black Belts and \$10.00 for all others. Non-members who wish to receive the newsletter pay \$5.00 annual fee.

Please make all checks or M.O.s payable to the American Self-Protection Association, Inc. and mail attention Gary Cook, Treasurer at: 9425 Olde Eight Road, Northfield, OH 44067.

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A.S.P. SEMINARS OPEN TO MEMBERS AND NON-MEMBERS ALIKE WILL BE ANNOUNCED VIA THIS NEWSLETTER.

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**ON IDENTIFYING A.S.P.**

We are receiving calls and letters from people around the country and the world, expressing interest in studying A,S,P, There is a widespread misconception among "martial artists" that, if one has a rank, even a high one, in some martial art, he is qualified to teach A,S,P, Some of those expressing interest are black belt collectors fishing for another belt.

Recently we have received a letter by Joseph F. Connolly, II from Florida, addressed to Dr. Baltazzi, who expressed interest in selecting A.S.P. as self-defense for the "non-martial arts students" of

his dojo, where judo and ju-jitsu are taught. Dr. Baltazzi's answer is reproduced below,

This and several similar cases highlight the necessity for all students of A.S.P. to identify themselves and to explain to others what is A.S.P. The most direct identification is to display the A.S.P. patch on our uniforms and to wear the A.S.P. pin whenever possible.

No one will be examined for promotion if he/she does not wear his patch on his/her uniform during training sessions. If he/she does not wear it, it is either because he/she does not think much of A.S.P. or he/she wants to get a black belt in our system and misrepresent it as one in the well-publicized oriental arts,

In either case he/she has no business in our Association.  
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- RECENT PROMOTIONS**  
Michelle James Red Belt I  
Gary Gregory 6th Kyu\*  
Matt King 6th Kyu\*  
Richard Santucci 5th Kyu\*  
Dan Stimmel 5th Kyu\*  
James Baltazzi 3rd Black Belt  
Paul Mandzak 4rth Black Belt  
Peter Metropulos 4rth Black Belt  
Troy Schultz 5th Black Belt  
James Phillips 5th Black Belt  
\*Aikido (A.S.P.) ranks.

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**AMERICAN SELF-PROTECTION ASSOCIATION, Inc.**

A not-for-profit corporation of Illinois

Office of the President

825 Greengate Oval, Sagamore Hills, OH 44067-2311

Tel/Fax (216) 467-1750 (call before faxing)

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**IMPORTANT REMINDER  
FOR ALL BLACK BELTS.**

**A.S.P. TECHNICAL  
KNOWLEDGE OF THE  
CORRESPONDING  
SUBJECT MATTER IS ONLY  
ONE OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR  
PROMOTION. TEACHING  
AND PROMOTING A.S.P. IS  
AN EQUALLY IMPORTANT  
REQUIREMENT. NO ONE  
WILL BE PROMOTED TO A  
HIGHER RANK UNLESS  
HE/SHE TRAINS IN THE  
MAIN BODY OF A.S.P. AND  
TEACHES IT OR ASSISTS  
SOMEONE WHO IS  
TEACHING IT.**

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Mr. Joseph F. Connolly, II  
4218 Arajo Court  
Belle Isle, FL 32812-2807

Dear Mr. Connolly:

Thank you for your letter of February 17 and for your expressed interest in adopting A.S.P. as the self-defense form to be taught to non-martial arts students. While we will be delighted to see A.S.P. being taught at your dojo, I must say that you have a wrong impression concerning the nature of A.S.P. WHICH IS A METHOD AND SYSTEM APPLICABLE TO ALL MOTION SKILLS, INCLUDING THE MARTIAL ARTS.

Rather than taking up your time, I would like to refer you to the enclosed material for a very cursory look at the tenor and breath of A.S.P. Many physical educators here and abroad have recognized its value as a revolutionary method and system for acquiring motor skills. The application of the fundamental A.S.P. method to judo, jujitsu, aikido, kickboxing, and stickfighting have been described in my books and are taught here under the A.S.P. umbrella. Their students are ranked accordingly.

Whatever the martial arts rank of a person, he/she is not qualified to teach A.S.P. unless he/she has studied it and authorized by me to teach it. A.S.P. is not a bunch of techniques thrown together that anyone can teach. It took me no less than twelve years of research to develop its basic concept, the validity of which has been recognized by many physical educators of stature. Techniques gleaned here and there from my books are not A.S.P., only the holistic method and approach is, and it cannot be superficially acquired.

I would be delighted to train someone to teach A.S.P. at your dojo, if there is serious interest and intent and if that person were willing to abide by the by-laws of our Association. Understanding the true nature of A.S.P. is the first step toward studying it.

Thank you again for your interest in A.S.P.

Sincerely,



Evan S. Baltazzi, D.Sc. (Paris), D. Phil. (Oxon.)  
Originator of A.S.P. and Founder of A.S.P.A., Inc.