Jujitsu – The Gentle Art Essay, Research Paper

To a person not conversant with this art, Jujitsu may be considered as a foul or derogatory term in Japanese. However, Jujitsu us one of the most effective and deadly forms of martial arts taught today. Unique among other forms of combat, Jujitsu holds the position of a parent art , of from which other forms of martial arts such as Aikido, Judo and several Karate styles were extracted. Jujitsu is a combination of all levels of combat. It incorporates chokes, striking, grappling, nerve and pressure point attacks, joint locks, redirection of momentum and throws.

The exact origins of Jujitsu are unclear, as most of its history was passed on in the oral tradition. The few early written references show that its origins date back to Japanese mythology, where it is said that the gods, Kajima and Kadori, used Jujitsu to discipline the lawless and wild inhabitants of the Eastern provinces. Therefore, by definition, the art is nearly 2000 years old, however records do exist which show that the art was being practiced as far back as the 8th Century, over twelve hundred years ago. Jujitsu was formalised and most popular during the Edo period of Japan. This was the era of the Samurai. Jujitsu was the Samurai s main set of combat techniques, after the sword. Jujitsu was a part of the Samurai s fighting skills, something he could use when he was unable to use his favourite weapon.

There are many different styles of Jujitsu that exist around the world, and many different ways to actually spell the name. The original spelling derived directly from the Japanese was Jujitsu. As the popularity and practice of this martial art spread across Europe, the spelling and pronunciation was forced to change. This occurred during World War II, when the name Jujitsu had to be changed to Jiu-jitsu (pronounced Jeeu-jitsu). This name-change occurred because the Germans occupying the area at the time claimed that the name resembled the word Jew , which was illegal to be spoken. Therefore the name was slightly altered so that the art could continue to exist and be taught throughout Europe.

Despite the difference is spelling, the meaning of the words is basically the same. The literal meaning of the name is the gentle art , however, since there can be many different translations of Japanese words, Ju can also mean soft, yielding, pliant and flexible, which are all important fundamental principles in this dangerous art. Jujitsu operates on the notion that force should never be met with force. Instead, to avoid an incoming attack, Jujitsu teaches to redirect the energy created by the attack into a counter move, rather than working against the attacking force.

Jujitsu is sometimes referred to as a complete and more rounded art. This is because it utilises all aspects of different martial arts, combining both standing and ground fighting. Certainly a puncher or kicker is at a disadvantage if they allow themselves to be taken to the ground. The grappler, or ground-fighter, is at a disadvantage to stay outside and try to use strikes with a striker . Therefore, a martial artist with both standing and grappling skills has a better, and some may consider unfair, advantage over his opponent. Another advantage of Jujitsu is the ability to modify techniques to meet the needs of the situation and abilities of the student, as some techniques work better than others based on height, weight and physical capabilities and limitations. Jujitsu

In addition, Jujitsu students are taught to do anything in their power to overcome an opponent, a practice that causes a lot of controversy in the martial arts community. It is certainly not uncommon to see a Jujitsu student being taught to gouge the eyeball, break or dislocate a limb, crush the windpipe or even break the neck of an opponent. These techniques are taught to be used only in extreme circumstances, however they illustrate well the lethal nature of the art to defeat an opponent with as little time and energy spent as possible. It is no wonder that Jujitsu is taught to American and Russian Special Forces, as well as armies and police units around the world.

For me, Jujitsu has become a most valued part of my life. It is not only about learning how to overcome an opponent, it is a way of life. It has taught me discipline and self-confidence, while helping me protect myself and avert possible injury in those circumstances where my friends or I have been under threat of, or in the midst of actual attack. Though I have only begun to learn the fundamental aspects of the art, I have already established a confident grasp and deep desire to learn. As we live in a society where threat of attack is an all too common occurrence, I would recommend learning a martial art to anyone, and Jujitsu is the most complete and well-rounded combat style to learn.