

Worthy of Being Passed On

...only when one integrates one's learning into one's comfort zone can one reach any level of mastery. Similarly, only when one integrates a movement seamlessly into one's art can one's art be worthy of being passed on....

Having shown competence at a set on skills, one passes an exam thus passing on to the next rank. But to pass an entire art on, one must be competent at more than just physical skills, and one's art must be worthy in its own right, with or without the founder's personal skills to back it up.

How can an art be ready to be passed on? As suggested in previous articles, an art should be strongly integrated. In Bushido-kai's 3-DVD set called *The Science of Sogo Budo*, Ian Cyrus (inheritor of the Chosen-do system), Brian Wilkes (of Seishi-ryu Sogo Budo), and I outline five methods in which an art can be integrated: (1) Pastiche, (2) Historical Investigation (3) Interpretation, (4) Juxtaposition, and (5) Philosophical Consistency/Technical Variety. You can read an article on this subject originally published in the May 1998 edition of *Inside Karate*, on our website's [article index page](#): *The Science of Sogo Budo*.

PASTICHING; Most attempts at founding an art either imitate a single source art, renaming it, or somewhat more creatively, pastiche several sources. If something is about 20% new, it can pass as new in the marketplace of ideas and products. Pastiche creates something new, but mere newness is not full integration. Most purported founders *pastiche* their arts, figuring their combination of studies is as valid as anyone else's. Perhaps on a metaphysical scale it is, but when it comes to reasons why an art should be passed on, integration beats combination every time.

HISTORICAL INVESTIGATION: Few contemporary "founders" research the roots of their art to understand what their original components and their intents were. If they did, they might find that the new art they intend to present to the world is nothing new. However, if they find that their proposed art integrates the old in a new way and serves a training purpose, *historical investigation* may be a valid method of integration.

INTERPRETATION: Many arts use the same sets of movements, defending against the same perceived situations, but do so in somewhat different manners. If a new founder's art takes the same techniques or kata and with very little adjustment interprets new self-defense skills from them, *interpretation* is the method by which a new version of an art can emerge.

JUXTAPOSITION: Most martial arts can fit into one of these four categories: (1) Weaponry, (2) Striking, (3) Locking/Throwing, and (4) Ground Grappling. By juxtaposing one category with another, one may create a different admixture of categories, giving the art a new flavor.

PHILOSOPHICAL CONSISTENCY/TECHNICAL VARIETY: Many martial arts have a guiding technical philosophy, for example *Defense from a medium distance against rushing punches*

and kicks, or Training for limber limbs and a calm mind. If the new proposed art adheres to its guiding philosophy but achieves its goals in a way different from other martial arts, it may have integrated its component parts in a way that fills a need.

In every case, the new must satisfy a perceived need or fill a gap in the old.

Having stated that an art worthy of being passed on *should be* integrated, and having introduced the methods in which it *can be* integrated, there is only one more step: creating a teaching method that can produce the people who will accurately represent and carry on the art. *That is the subject for our next installment.*