

KODENKAN YUDANSHAKAI

ATARASHI DENTO

NEW TRADITIONS

Paul Haber, Shihan, editor

December 2023

A Newsletter serving
Kodenken Yudanshakai in
Seishiro Okazaki, and



I mentioned earlier that
articles from our
of the new readers or
web site. This is the first of those, with updated information and a few corrections. We
hope you enjoy these and would really appreciate any feedback or suggestions. Here
we go...

Members and Associates of the
the traditions of Professor Henry
Dai- Shihan Joseph Holck.

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Welcome to the return of the inaugural edition of ATARASHI DENTO, which means New Traditions. This quarterly newsletter is being sent to all Yudansha members of the KDK. We hope you find it enjoyable, as well as informative. Please print out this letter and post for your students so they may share this information. This is for all Yudansha AND students.

If you - or a Yudansha you know - changes your email address, please notify Shihan Neil Konigsberg (njkonigsberg@gmail.com) so he can keep our membership list current.

In this first issue, and in subsequent issues, we will attempt to inform, teach and titillate your imagination, to encourage you to explore your art, related arts, and - perhaps- ways to improve what you do. Remember, the Martial Arts are just that - ARTS. That means that we can always improve, get better, get faster, get smoother- whatever makes your art better. Since our philosophy is that today's white belt will someday be tomorrow's Shihan, we will discuss all aspects of Okinawan/Japanese, Hawaiian, and Chinese martial arts.

Just one more thing.....we welcome your suggestions and comments- and encourage you to submit articles. Please think of this as YOUR newsletter. Let's begin...

"Train tirelessly to defeat the greatest enemy, yourself, and to discover the greatest master, yourself."

Amitufo, Master, Shaolin Chinese Boxing.

"If you're growing, you're green, if you're stagnant, you rot."

Anonymous

Unfortunately, the first article is NOT a reboot, but sad news.

IN MEMORIAM

A light appears

Illuminates

Moves on

Barry Thaddeus Kalei Holck transitioned on October 5, 2023 of pancreatic cancer.

Barry was born in Hawai'i on July 13, 1949 to Joseph Holck and Amy Holck (Montero). He began his training in Danzanryu Jujitsu at a young age under his father and Prof. Jack Wheat. The family moved to Tucson, Arizona in the early 1960's where he was one of the original instructors of the Kodenkan of Tucson dojo, as well as contributing to the establishment of the Kodenkan Yudanshakai with his parents in 1967.

His love for the Martial Arts was a lifelong pursuit of excellence. The Kodenkan Yudanshakai recognized him as a 10th dan in Danzan Ryu. He held the rank of Shihan in Shorin Ryu (Matsumura Seito-Ha), and was a black belt in Shaolin Tsu (Kobayashi ryu) and Shito ryu.

His methodology was very traditional. The depth and breadth of his knowledge was astounding. A true Martial Artist...

His son, Nicholas, and grandchildren, Kalani and Kalakehounani, reside in Tucson.

Information on a memorial will be sent out at a later time.

WHAT'S NEW?

10/08/23 - **KDK FALL PICNIC**- This year's annual picnic took place on October 8, 2023. The picnic took place at McCormick Park, which is a new location for us. The park was great, there were two playground areas for the kids and everything was within sight of the ramada. We counted around 50 people who participated this year. That number is down a little from last year, but we had a great time. We had new students and families show up and a few faces we hadn't seen in years. Thanks to Jackie Britt, Shihan for the update.

Saturday 11/4/23 and Sunday 11/5/23 - **CANDIDATE TESTING**- Candidates for Black Belt and those upgrading in the Yudansha ranks were tested at MATS dojo and the Kodenkan Center. Congratulations to all those who succeeded, and we'll see you at the promotion ceremony!

OPENING YOUR OWN DOJO

This will be the first of a series discussing various aspects of starting and running our own dojo, within the KDK. Submitted by **Jim Kelton, Shihan**

My thoughts about running a Dojo from a non-traditional setting (e.g. YMCA, City Park and Rec facility):

Benefits

- Instructor is paid hourly or a percent of revenues received
- Minimal or no financial obligations (e.g. no upfront rent deposit, no monthly rent, no maintenance expenses)
- Marketing may partially be provided by entity that provides facility (e.g. classes may appear in a brochure of classes)

Negatives

- The facility may not be available on the dates and times expected (e.g. outside entity/group reserves the room on your class day/time).
- Your classes may be relocated to another location (e.g. a larger or more profitable class bumps your classes into a smaller room or different building)
- Staff at the entity may change (e.g. a new staff member may want to emphasize other classes, doesn't get along with martial arts instructors)
- Lack of flexibility (e.g. the facility may only be available on fixed days and times, prohibiting special events on weekends)

Other Considerations

- By increasing your class size and revenue to the group, your classes become more important and staff will do what they can to keep you happy.
- Marketing (e.g. flyers, website, referrals) is needed to attract a sufficient number of new students, don't rely on the facility's marketing program. A website doesn't have to have the name of a facility that could change over time. Instead, Tucson Budo Kai could be used as the name of the dojo with a contact page that lists the event location.
- Consistency and reliability is important, both for new students as well as staff at the facility. Class must be held. If the instructor is sick or out of town, arrangements must be made so someone else can run the class.

Next time- the first of several parts- hints from Dai Shihan Vinson Holck, generously provided by Ken Fiore, Shihan.

KANJI KORNER

By David Heacock, Shihan

漢字

Mysterious. BAFFLING. *MADDENING!* Thank goodness for Romanization!

This might be how you feel looking at the arcane characters that represent your skills as a practitioner of the Japanese defense arts. Due to their strangeness you might choose to give them only a passing nod. Or come to envision them as a gateway to fuller understanding and deeper respect for your accomplishments.



This is the introductory look at *kanji*—where they came from, how they are put together to signify meaning, and how they have changed over time. In future issues we will be discussing individual characters and their significance.

As the famous Seagull said, “Let’s begin with level flight.”

While there are tantalizing clues to written languages dating back perhaps tens of thousands of years, the smattering that have come to light so far have defied translation. Even many historical languages have passed into the darkness with their speakers and scribes. Written language tends to be the product of stable agrarian civilizations, especially those with large cities where conduct of commerce was perhaps the greatest concern. As such, our earliest known examples come from the “fertile crescent” of the Middle East, dating to about nine thousand years ago. Yet, it was not until about 4100 BP (Before Present) that these so-called “counting tokens” became symbols impressed in clay for recording individual property and stores of goods. After that, writing tended to be taken over by the priestly class who often monopolized education.



The same appears in the rise of writing in Asia. It is said that by about 4800 BCE the earliest peoples were using symbols but not in any known linguist system. Such “pictograms” are found incised in jades and pottery by about 2500 – 2000 BP. The earliest true characters are thought to have come from cracks produced by heating the shells of turtles and divination bones. These were recorded and have come down to us as a display of change in writing.

Oracle Bone	Old Chinese	meaning	Modern character	Modern Chinese
	*muk *kens	eye to see		mù jiàn

As can be seen in this example, a single symbol may express multiple meanings.* And this has consequences for the Japanese written language as well.

As for the modern inhabitants of *Nihon*, the “Origin of the Sun,” there are genetic ties to China and Korea from later migrations. However, archeological evidence puts the first people on the islands before 30,000 BP, and the first widely recognizable civilization (the Jōmon) by 14,000 BP. Even so, there is at present no evidence of a written language.

Despite being an advanced society with early trade routes to China, it was not until extensive diplomatic missions were initiated after 600 CE (Common Era), which resulted in a large increase in Chinese literacy at the Japanese court. The Japanese language had no written form at the time Chinese characters were introduced, and texts were written and read only in Chinese. Then, in the 9th century CE, a system known as *kanbun* emerged (漢文 Han dynasty China + sentence, composition, text. That is, writing composed entirely of *kanji*.), using Chinese text with diacritical marks (which show how to pronounce something) to allow Japanese speakers to restructure and read Chinese sentences, by changing word order and adding particles and verb endings, in accordance with the rules of native Japanese grammar. This way, Chinese characters came to be used to write Japanese words.

Along with the use of the *Han zi* (Chinese characters), two other styles developed. *Hiragana* is a cursive form developed from an earlier writing system (*man'yōgana*) that used Chinese characters for their sounds and not their meanings. Known as *onna-de* (Ladies’ hand) this form allowed women (then forbidden an education) access to writing. *Katakana* emerged when monastic students simplified *man'yōgana* to single constituent elements (the simplest parts of a word).

In modern Japanese, *kanji* are used to write nouns, adjective stems, and verb stems. *Hiragana* are used to write inflected verb and adjective endings and as phonetic complements to distinguish different readings; as particles; and for miscellaneous words which have no *kanji* or whose *kanji* is considered obscure or too difficult to read or remember. Finally, *katakana* are mostly used for representing onomatopoeia (words that imitate sounds), foreign loanwords (except those borrowed from ancient Chinese), the names of plants and animals (with exceptions), and for www.romajidesu.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday 1/27/24 - **BLACK BELT WORKOUT** - 8-11 a.m.

Kodenkan Center, 3127 Stone Avenue, Tucson

Saturday 1/27/24 - **YUDANSHA PROMOTION CEREMONY AND BANQUET**

St Frances Cabrini Parish Hall, 3201 East Presidio, Tucson

Doors Open- 3:45 PM

Photos- 4:00 PM

Ceremony- 5:00 PM

Banquet- 6:00 PM

PARK THROUGH THE GATE ON THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF THE FACILITY.

Sunday 1/28/24 - **ANNUAL BLACK BELT MEETING**- 9:00 AM- **MATS DOJO**

Saturday 2/10/24 - **KDK BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING** - 2:15 at **MATS DOJO**

Sunday 2/11/24 - **QUARTERLY KYU TESTING** -11:00- 3:00 at **MATS DOJO**

March 1-3/24 - **KYU TRAINING CLINICS**- time, and location TBD

EDITOR'S EDGE

This month we are honored to have an article donated to us by Professor Michael Chubb and written by Sensei William Fischer

“GIRI” – A DANZAN RYU TRADITION

By Wm. M. Fischer, sensei

Traditions nowadays seem to be under attack by some as not fitting well in today's society. It is argued that a tradition is somehow a roadblock to growth or thought and therefore should be marginalized so that we may move forward, unimpeded. And yet, it is tradition that is at the heart of true martial arts and of every genuine martial artist.

In the Esoteric Principles of Judo, Prof. Henry Seishiro Okazaki begins with the goal of every martial artist by saying, “...it may be well said that the primary objective of practicing judo is perfection of character.” He then goes on by pointing the way to that goal – “And to perfect one's character, one must be grateful for the abundant blessings of Heaven, Earth and Nature, as well as for the great love of parents: one must realize his enormous debt to teachers and be ever mindful of his obligations to the general public.” Prof. Okazaki's blueprint for perfection of character moves out naturally, like ripples from a stone dropped in still water – gratitude, to obligation, to service. The idea of indebtedness to one's teacher is so important to the Professor that it is mentioned twice in the Esoteric Principles: “Remember always parental love and one's enormous indebtedness to teachers.”

Prof. Okazaki, visionary that he was, realized that gratitude gives rise to obligation: “As a member of a family one's first duty is to be filial to parents.” In Japanese, the word for duty is “giri,” which is generally translated as “moral debt.”

A true martial artist embraces giri; he does not try to evade it. He realizes that, to be truly grateful for the gift of knowledge and direction he receives from others, a proportionate debt is created. The greater the gift, the greater the debt.

Especially in the martial arts, obligation is of greater importance than even that which is received. As a white belt, learning even the basics of jujitsu, one begins to understand the catastrophic and permanent damage that can be rained down upon an opponent. To be entrusted with this kind of knowledge requires a corresponding obligation to be instilled in order that it may be employed with great care and discretion. As the student progresses and receives instruction in even more devastating techniques that can cripple or even kill, the obligation must become as great as the consequences that could result from those actions. As Prof. Okazaki says, “Whatever the trials or dangers, even “Hell under the upraised sword,” remain calm and remember the doctrine imparted to you by your teacher.”

The concept of “giri” is one of the more broad and complex of traditional values which, quite naturally, mirrors the relationship between student and sensei. It is not simply *quid pro quo*: the paying off of a physical debt. Its foundation contains the virtues of loyalty, trust, gratitude, respect and moral debt.

A martial artist who does not embrace giri is no martial artist at all. One either follows the values which he purports to revere by his or her actions or does not. A sensei who does not fully understand and impart the importance of giri to the students entrusted to his stewardship is not fulfilling his responsibilities as a sensei. A Professor who does not profess and demonstrate the moral concepts of giri at every turn in his martial life – a concept fundamental to the Danzan Ryu system – simply and deceitfully masquerades behind a meaningless title.

My own martial arts journey began over 58 years ago in 1965, learning Kodokan judo at a community center in Compton. The sensei, Bill White (deceased), lived 25 miles away but took time to volunteer two nights a week to teach the class and train a tall, skinny and woefully uncoordinated high school student not only the techniques but the spirit of the martial arts that lay behind them. Then, in high school, sensei Bob Buschelman put me through the basics of Shotokan karate during my senior year. Over a half century later, I still revere and carry an abiding indebtedness to what these men taught me (and, yes, I still correspond with sensei Buschelman). Had they not shown me the way – the “do” – my study of the martial arts would have been short lived.

However, it did not stop there. While at college in 1967, hungry for the opportunity to learn more, I came across Clyde Zimmerman, who became my judo sensei for 4 years. His tutelage opened unexpected opportunities to meet and train with the best of the best judo players in the country – Hayward Nishioka, Gene Mauro, Igor Zaptessin, “Judo Gene” Lebell, Samir and Nabil Faragala, Werner Venetz, Yasuhiko Nagatoshi and others too many to name. But for sensei Zimmerman, these legends would have been only names I read about in Black Belt Magazine and not actual “on the mat” learning experiences that I experienced and treasure. It is a debt I have yet to repay and could never repay in full.

Notwithstanding the giri to these men, the moral obligation to them that endures to this day takes a back seat to the man who opened Danzan Ryu jujitsu to me in 1971. I was a first year law student with a brutal schedule and unable to attend classes regularly. However, Sensei Mike Chubb patiently told me to “come when I can” and attendance was sporadic for several years. However, we kept in touch.

When finally able to commit more time to jujitsu, Sensei provided the opportunities of training and experiences to advance my skill level. When his growing core of black belts

required it, Sensei created the Shoshin Ryu Yudanshakai: The School of the Beginner's Mind Black Belt Association. Then came exposure to Danzan history and to those who lived and formed it. It was Sensei who brought both myself and all of his students in contact with original Okazaki students and black belts, the names of whom were only known but highly esteemed by the entire ryu. The original Hawaiian group, the American Jujitsu Institute, was accustomed to jujitsuka from around the globe visiting and looking for some sort of recognition or belt promotion. In Sensei, they found the Esoteric Principles of Prof. Okazaki in action: humility, civility, amiability, a commitment to the ryu and a commitment to service. And, as a result of this and other actions, the Ohana weekend was created in 1990.

When ready, he introduced his students, including myself, to the higher arts, ignoring the thought that rank versus maturity established entry to those levels of knowledge. He recognized that there were those within the ryu for whom recognition was due, but which was not forthcoming due to either political or personal issues, and he remedied it. In short, he demonstrated the values enumerated in the Esoteric Principles – modesty, courage, self sufficiency and leadership – all by action rather than words.

It is said that the 1% of time in the dojo will permeate the 99% of the time outside, in the community. In short, Sensei's instruction, counsel, example and direction for more than 50 years had permeated both my personal and professional life. Over 50 years of direction – and over 50 years of giri.

The question then becomes, "How does the martial artist fulfill giri?" That question is really dependent upon the bond that has been created between student and sensei. However, is it clear that the higher one rises in the ranks, the greater is the obligation, and at the center of that obligation is respect in both word and action. It is ingrained in the Esoteric Principles as well as the Shoshin Ryu Code of Ethics.

How does one demonstrate respect? I recall that one of our black belts was training in another art and wished to visit a dojo within his group. When he told me, my first question was, "Did you seek permission from your sensei?" I knew his sensei and knew that he would readily approve it, and I was correct. The black belt, however, did not anticipate how both surprised and grateful his sensei was that he had been asked. In one simple gesture of respect, his student exhibited a level of martial arts maturity that was far beyond his current rank. **One cannot forget that a student can only have ONE sensei.** Likewise, other organizations have graciously conferred rank promotions on me in the past. However, before accepting the honor, it was absolutely necessary to inform Sensei and get his approval, out of the most basic of respect. Every black belt should respect the fact that his authority to elevate a student's rank flows not from any organization (which can confer professorships) but only from his sensei.

A lot is made these days about “institutional knowledge.” Lewis Platt, former CEO of Hewlett Packard said it best: *“If only HP knew what HP knows, we would be three times more productive.”* A further aspect of respect is to acknowledge that, although sensei may have taught you all you know, he has not taught you all he knows. While a student may think that he has hatched the “next great idea,” it is likely that the idea is one that has already been seen, evaluated and perhaps found wanting in his sensei’s vast wealth of experiences. Seeking the counsel and advice of one’s sensei is not only a mark of respect, but also a mark of the student’s good judgment. If one cannot recognize his sensei’s knowledge and resultant wisdom, he can also not exploit it to successfully proceed forward.

Giri and respect go hand in hand. Its presence in a martial artist is as glaring its absence. Both are on full display for all the world to see. Because it is personal and goes to the very core of the student/sensei relationship, it cannot be disguised, glossed over or deflected to another person or body of persons. Giri is a foundation that finds its beginnings all the way back to Bushido – the Way of the Warrior. Clearly, a person espousing his dedication to Kodokan – “The School of Ancient Traditions” – will be judged on his dedication to the traditions which are at its very base.

