

KODENKAN YUDANSHAKAI

ATARASHI DENTO

NEW TRADITIONS

September 2025

Paul Haber, Shihan, editor

A newsletter serving
Kodenkan Yudanshakai
Professor Henry Seishiro
and Dai Shihan Joseph

Welcome to the
the member or
Yudanshakai.



Members and Associates of
in the traditions of
Okazaki
Holck

newsletter dedicated to you,
associate of Kodenkan

This issue, we have a special treat!

INTRODUCTION

At the June meeting of the Kodenkan Yudanshakai Board of Directors, Meleana Tomooka, Shihan, reminded us of the importance of family, forgiveness, and harmony. She shared the spirit of Ohana where we help each other, because in our Kodenkan Yudanshakai family, no one gets left behind. Meleana talked about the spirit of Aloha, loving and respecting each other as a way of life. She composed the following article to help all of us better understand the true nature of martial arts and our Kodenkan Yudanshakai family. – Jim Kelton, Shihan

Meleana Tomooka, Shihan

My parents expected us to teach our martial arts students about Ohana and how to kokua. They also emphasized that the Kodankan Yudanshakai is the extension of the Holck Ohana. What we have in our ohana is to be shared with each other and with the community.

This is the foundation and tradition of the Kodankan Yudanshakai. I feel that I need to reemphasize this and explain the Hawaiian terminology. These terms are much deeper than its translation.

To understand what I mean as I go through each term, I suggest that you watch the movie "Avatar." Particularly, "Avatar: The Way of Water." The movies perfectly resemble the cultures of all indigenous people. In our case, the Hawaiian and Japanese cultures. Allow me to add here that the Na'vi culture in these movies are based on the Japanese, Chinese, Hindu, Polynesian, Native American and African cultures, all of which have the same spiritual beliefs, interconnectedness to one another and to nature, respect of all life and importance of community.

ALOHA

Aloha is more than a greeting. Yes, it means "Hello" or "Good bye". But it also means "Love."

Aloha is a feeling. If I say Aloha (Hello), it's a heartfelt greeting meaning "I'm so happy to see you." When spoken, the word sounds melodic because it is said from the heart.

If I say "Aloha" to say "goodbye," it's more like saying "farewell", "I will miss you", or "until we meet again." It's much like saying "Please take good care" to the other person.

Aloha is a term of love and affection, as well as respect and a spiritual connection. The Spirit of Aloha.

SPIRIT OF ALOHA – The way of life

Alo – means your Presence, your Being, your Spirit. Living fully present in the moment.

Ha – means Breath.

Alo-Ha together – means "The breath of life".

Aloha, or the spirit of aloha, is very deep in the essence of the Hawaiian people. Being present and balanced within oneself, with others and with nature.

The way of life – Is living life with love, peace, harmony, and interconnectedness. Being kind, respectful, humble, helpful and patient. All that fosters goodwill and generosity.

OHANA

In Hawaiian culture, ohana is deeper than just meaning “family”. It refers to blood relatives, but also refers to friends, neighbors, and community. It’s a term that encompasses the feeling of belonging, love, respect and a sense of being responsible for one another.

SPIRIT OF OHANA

Lilo and Stitch, an American science fiction comedy film, says “Ohana means family, and family means nobody gets left behind or forgotten.” This saying refers to anyone who feels like “family.”

KOKUA

Means to help one another. It’s in the spirit of kindness, being generous with your time and offering help without expecting anything in return. For example, volunteering at events, helping an elder with their groceries, picking up trash on the ground, and helping the community in a disaster.

HO’OPONOPONO

Ho’oponopono is considered a healing art of forgiveness.

Disharmony creates illness in the mind and body that is caused from stress of anger, guilt and lack of forgiveness. The disharmony is then projected to those that surround the one that is affected, and spreads the imbalance to family, co-workers and the community. This is called “bad pono”, bad energy, imbalance.

How to heal from bad pono. When there is a dispute between two people - one caused harm to another, emotionally or physically - an imbalance is created. This is called bad pono. Each person will go to their elder of the family (or of the community) to discuss what had happened. The discussion is received with advice or reprimand from their elders.

After their meeting, each will seclude themselves in silence, to reflect on their disagreement and acknowledge feelings or injuries. After their time of silence, they will come together to confess and forgive each other for the cause of the dispute. Also, forgive themselves for feeling and spreading the imbalance to self and others as the result of it.

Either with a lei presentation between the two, or a feast along with their community or families, **bad pono is released to the past** and the issue is resolved. **Good pono is now restored and all are in harmony again.**

WHAT'S NEW?

Thanks to **Isaac Pimienta**, for authoring this report.

The Kodokan Yudanshakai's July Danzan Ryu Jujitsu Workout was a tremendous success! Jujitsu-ka from across Arizona, California, and even Washington gathered at Shihan Irene Swanson's Kodokan Center Dojo for an intense three-day training session.

The event offered a comprehensive workout covering seven of the Danzan Ryu Jujitsu boards in a single weekend. From July 18th to 20th, participants trained for a total of 11 hours at the Kodokan Center, covering approximately 163 techniques. Friday evening focused on the Yawara board and a select number of techniques from the Nage no Kata board. It was a pleasure to see several color belts on the mat, working hard to refine their skills. Saturday morning continued with the remainder of the Nage no Kata, followed by Shime no Kata, and Oku no Kata. Saturday afternoon sessions covered the Shinen no Maki and began the Shinyo no Maki. That evening, attendees gathered for a well-attended dinner, enjoying relaxed and friendly conversation off the mat, a welcome

break before the final day of training. Despite sore muscles and bruises from the previous sessions, over 20 dedicated martial artists returned Sunday morning to complete the Shinyo no Maki and begin the Kiai no Maki. Over the course of the weekend, a total of 27 practitioners stepped onto the mat to participate in at least one session.

This successful event would not have been possible without the hard work, preparation, and planning done by Shihan Steve Herzog and Sensei Benito Pimienta. Special thanks to Shihan Irene Swanson for providing her dojo for the entire weekend and to Shihan Julian for tapping the Ott Y Budo Kai fund for the dinner tab!



Shihan Herzog and Sensei Benito



Sensei Benito and Sempai Isaac



Throwing Techniques



July KDK Center Post Workout

MEET THE SENSEI



David A Chait, O- Sensei

I began martial arts training with Shotokan Karate of America (SKA) in a garage club led by Lydia Levin, in Sierra Vista, Arizona in the late spring of 1985. Lydia was working as a substitute teacher and had recently been convinced to begin teaching Karate by one of her students, Brian Hursch. My step brother Ian Slavin, who was a friend and classmate of Brian, was attending this class for a time. For no reason I can explain except that I did not want to be left out, I started to attend shortly after classes began.

In December of that year, Lydia Sensei secured permission for me to attend Winter Special Training in Long Beach California at age 15; the policy at the time was that

participants had to be 16 or older. This opened a new dimension of the martial arts for me. I ultimately attended 6 special trainings while still in high school, and tested for Shodan at one in the summer of 1988, a few weeks before turning 18.

While I was still a brown belt with the SKA, my Sensei's husband, Mark Levin, told me about a Jujitsu class he looked into being taught after hours at an area middle school. "The workout isn't that hard, but the warm up will kill you – the teacher is tough as nails like Lydia." He was referring to Sensei Meleana Tomooka. I attended her Danzan Ryu class, and was captivated by what this Sensei could do--simple Ukemi was fascinating to me. I secured permission to study in parallel from Sensei Lydia, and stayed on to Yellow belt before life interrupted my study.

After returning from college, I primarily trained in Shotokan informally with Micheal Laridon. He had been a personal friend of Sensei Lydia's from the Cal State Long Beach SKA dojo, and moved from Southern California to Sierra Vista. I owe much of my understanding of Jiyu Kumite to our training and his instruction. During that time, he connected us with many other martial artists of various styles. Among others, he cross trained with artists who studied American Boxing, Kenpo, Tae Kwon Do, and a retired Navy Seal who studied Snake style Kung Fu--very enriching exchanges.

I eventually resumed training with Sensei Tomooka, and reached the San Kyu level in Danzan Ryu. By this time, my original Shotokan instructor had separated from her husband, and left the Sierra Vista area. Her ex-husband, Mark, though, was leading a class at Buena Health and Fitness. He approached me one day at work to see if I wanted to take over the class as he was closing his business and moving to San Diego. So, my first taste of teaching was a renewed adventure in Karate. The class was forced to close eventually when the facility was remodeled and eliminated the practice space we used.

In early 2000, I returned to then O'Sensei Tomooka's class and continued to train with her to Shodan and beyond. I loved the diverse techniques of Danzan Ryu. However, my passion for striking arts never left me, and so I approached Shihan Vinson Holck to ask his advice. He suggested I study Matsuno Kajukenbo Kai. "You already have an understanding of Karate basics, so I won't be teaching you those techniques--I expect you to incorporate what you find valuable from Shotokan. Meleana is teaching you Danzan, one of the foundational arts of Kajukenbo, so I don't need to teach you Jujitsu. So you can come to Tucson as you are able and I will teach you the Kajukenbo kata and teaching methods." I found that Kajukenbo was the ideal framework for my approach to fighting, and so continued my pursuit of Danzan and Kajukenbo in parallel.

I received the rank of Shodan in Matsuno Kajukenbo Kai in July 2002, and Danzan Ryu in February 2003. Shihan Holck encouraged me to start teaching Kajukenbo one on one if I knew anyone that had an interest, even prior to me completing my Shodan test. As chance would have it, I was approached by a father and son while I practiced Kajukenbo kata in the park.

Eventually, I taught Matsuno Kajukenbo Kai from the detached garage at my property south of Sierra Vista, and took over the Danzan Ryu class being offered through the City, taught at the Oscar Young Community Center or Ethel Berger Center. I first attained the title of Sensei from the Kodenkan Yudanshakai in July of 2004, when I was promoted to Nidan in Matsuno Kajukenbo Kai--one of my happiest personal achievements.

During my remaining years in Sierra Vista, I was not the sole instructor of the Danzan Ryu class, as we shifted that responsibility among two others: Kris Wheeler (now Cortez) and Tony Maslanka. It was my privilege to teach many of Shihan Meleana's Danzan students, and work with a diverse group, including all of my children, in Matsuno Kajukenbo Kai. I closed my class in July of 2013 when I moved to Vancouver, WA.

Today I hold the rank of Sandan in Danzan Ryu, and Godan in Matsuno Kajukenbo Kai. I support Shihan Paul Haber's instruction of Matsuno Kajukenbo Kai as my schedule permits, and look forward to resuming teaching both Kajukenbo and Danzan Ryu.

DO YOU HAVE A SENSEI OR TEACHER THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO HAVE PROFILED ON YOUR NEWSLETTER? PLEASE SEND A SHORT BIO AND PHOTOGRAPH TO SHIHAN HABER AT pjhaber2@gmail.com.

UPCOMING EVENTS

9/6/25- **Senior Clinics**-11-2PM- Kodenkan Center; Cost - \$10/day

9/7/25- **Senior Clinics**-9-12PM - MATS

9/13/25- **Board of Directors Meeting**- 2:15-3:15 at MATS and Zoom

10/12/25- **KDK fall picnic**. Time and location TBD

11/1/25- **Candidate Testing**- Time and location TBD

11/2/25- **Candidate Testing**- Time and location TBD

11/8/25- **Board of Directors Meeting**- 2:15-3:15 at MATS and Zoom

12/6/25- **Alternate Candidate Testing**

12/7/25 - **Holiday Party**- Time TBD at MATS

KANJI KORNER

By Dave Heacock, Shihan

決る

Time once again to *eguru*: excavate, get to the bottom of things, and to *kujiru*: dig around in the techniques and principles we must acquire to make our training effective.

PART THREE

BLOCKS

Now that you have a few basic terms tucked into your vocabulary and a basic—hopefully, evolving—understanding of stances, it is time to look into the notion of *UKE*, the third step in any training regimen.

There are two facets to the notion of *uke*. First, the direct meaning is one of 受 receiving and accepting. The verb *ukeru* (受ける), of which our base word is a shortened version, translates as: receive, have, take, get, obtain; but also, to be given. In this sense, it is a passive state. A bridge concept is the expression *ukemi* (受身), a noun meaning: the defensive. Here *mi* would be part of the compound *miugoki* (みうごき) comprised of 身 person, someone and the verb: *ugoku* (動く) to make a move, to take action. This is the second facet of *uke* as expressed in the idea of a defensive movement, *shubiteki* (守備的 protection, defense + equip, preparation + adjective ending). Confused yet? Go back to your techniques and see how all this comes together in a simple movement.

Different *Ryū* (schools, styles) may call the same technique by a different name. I will use those most familiar to us. Illustrations of the blocks are given below.

Uchi uke (内受け) Meaning: inside, within plus the defensive. That is, a receiving movement that comes from the inside or center.

Soto uke (外受け) Meaning: outside, exterior plus the defensive. That is, a receiving movement that comes from the outside. The character 外 is also the root of the verb *hazusu* (外す), which means to dodge, evade, avoid; and also to miss (a target, chance, punch, etc.).

Age uke (上受け) From the verb *ageru* (上げる to raise, to elevate), this is the rising block. It is as much a parry as a block.

Jōdan (jou-) uke (上段受け above, up, over + *dankai* 段階 level + the defensive) This is the high block. It blocks (“receives,” but in an active manner) an attack coming from above the head—not acting as a parry but rather to neutralize.

Gedan uke (下段受け below, down + *dankai* 段階 level + the defensive) As *shita*, 下 indicates the lower part, the lower half (of the body). This is the low block or down block. Whether as a swinging block or a pressing block, it comes from a higher position to contact or parry away an incoming attack.

Shutō (-tou) uke (手刀受け hand + (single edged) sword, knife + the defensive) This is the knife (or sword) hand block. The name refers to the outside edge of the hand, and the block can be used at any level.

Wari uke (割り受け) From the verb: *waru* (割る to divide, separate, split), these are the “split blocks” in which the hands or arms do effectively the same technique, at any level, with separation between them.

Jūji (Juu-) Uke (also: Kosa uke) (十字受け ten + character (esp. *kanji*) + the defensive) These are the “cross” or “crossed” blocks. The wrists are crossed, the hands are closed, and the block may be used at any level.

Hasami uke (鉗受け scissors + the defensive) These are the scissors blocks. The wrists are crossed, the hands are fully open in *shutō*, and the block may be used at any level.

Sagurite uke (探り手受け) From the verb: *saguru* (探る) feel around for, grope, search for, plus hands plus the defensive. This is the searching hands block from the *Passai katas*, said to be developed for feeling around in the dark for an opponent.

There are many other blocks and variations, including those involving the foot, to be found in advanced katas, but these are the basic and most frequently used ones.

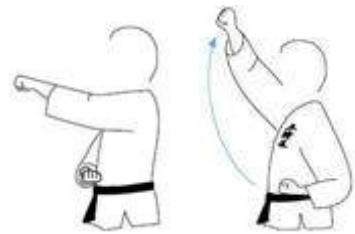
THE BLOCKS ILLUSTRATED



Uchi uke



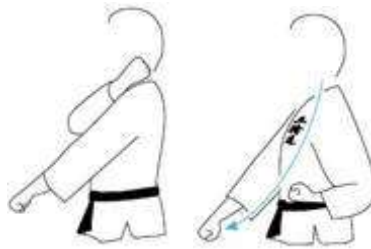
Soto uke



Age uke



Jōdan uke



Gedan uke



Shutō uke



Wari uke



Jūji uke



Hasami uke



Part Four will look into striking techniques. If you have comments, questions, or would like to see specific terms addressed, please email me at sattvadmh@aol.com.

All translations and kanji from www.Jisho.org

EDITOR'S EDGE

As we resume our journey, tracing the background and history of Karate, we continue to find masters - some well known, some not - who were instrumental in developing the art as we know it today. Just a reminder - we can include here only a small portion of the masters, their styles and their history; for more information, read Christopher M Clarke's books *Okinawan Karate, a History of Styles and Masters, Volumes 1&2*, and *The Essence of Okinawan Karate* by Nagamine Shoshin. Of course, other information may also be found online.

As you may recall, we were tracing the lineage of Shuri-te/ Shorin-ryu to the next generation after **Matsumura Sokon**, **Matsumora Kosaku** and **Itosu Yasutsune** (AKA Itosu Ankoh), which included, among others **Yabu Kentsu**, called the Sergeant, **Kyan Chotoku** and reputed giant Motobu Choki.

The various branches of the style we know today as Shorin-ryu developed primarily from the Okinawan arts of *Shuri-te* or Hands of Shuri, the capital of Okinawa at that time. *Shuri-te* was heavily influenced by centuries of exposure to the Chinese martial arts, but unlike the *Naha-te* systems, such as *Goju-ryu* (which we'll consider later), it was an amalgamation of Chinese arts and traditional Okinawan fighting systems.

During the several centuries of the development of Okinawan martial arts, there were only vague differences in traditions. In the early years of the twentieth century, teachers such as Itosu and Matsumura resisted the entire concept of styles, or systems. Not until the "Japanisation" of Karate in the mid-twentieth century were great distinctions made between styles. It was not uncommon for practitioners - masters, if you will - to train together and exchange techniques, kata and principles. A good example is Funakoshi Gichin, who absolutely refused to consider *systems* and sent his sons to other masters and to China to learn additional material.

SHORIN-RYU

By the early 1930's, however, teachers began to identify the systems. According to Christopher Clark, one of the first was **Chibana Chosin**, a student of **Itosu**, who chose the name *Shorin-ryu*, to indicate a connection with the fabled Shaolin Temple. (An interesting note is the legend that there were **several** Shaolin Temples, including one in Fujian Province in Southern China, which we will discuss later.) Chibana was born in a lineage that traced back to one of the kings of Okinawa, and he was believed to be related to both Motobu Choki and Kiyan Chotoku. After being refused as a student twice by Itosu, he was finally accepted and eventually became *Shihan-dai*, a kind of live-in student, assistant instructor and servant.

Chibana passed on Itosu's kata but also developed his own versions of several of them. Most versions of Kobayashi-ryu teach katas Naihanchi 1-3, Pinan 1-5, Passai Sho & Dai, Chinto, Kusanku Sho & Dai and Chinto. The style he taught has developed into *Kobayashi-ryu*, or Little Forest Style. Several of his senior students also founded their own branches of Shorin-ryu. Chibana taught relatively high stances, quick and light movements, with explosive power. The primary kick used was *mae-geri* or front kicks, performed with the toe tips.

Although he lost most of his friends and family members during World War II, **Chibana** survived, but finally succumbed to throat cancer in 1969. **Chibana** was an old-school karateka and vigorously opposed the use of his art in sport, considering it a deadly art, to be used in self-defense. Before his death, he promoted the following three students to 9th Dan *Hanshi*: **Higa Yuchoku**, founder of the *Kyudokan* system of *Shorin-ryu*; **Nakama Chozo**, one of Okinawa's premier Karate historians; and **Kinjo Kensei**, an expert with the sai, and one of the nine members of a "special committee", assembled by the governor of Okinawa to address the need for better karate instruction in the schools. Kinjo was one of the official *karatedo* leaders who met at a meeting of *Dai Nippon*

Butokukai, the official governing body for martial arts, to discuss the standards for awarding rank within their art. He called his style Kushin-ryu, and taught kata from both Shorin-ryu and Naha-te.

MATSUBAISHI-RYU

Another version of *Shorin-ryu* is *Matsubaishi-ryu*, developed by **Nagamine Shoshin**, one of the two principal styles descended from both *Chibana* and *Itosu*. **Nagamine** studied under several of the top karate masters of the period, and was good friends with **Miyagi Chojun**, the founder of *Goju-ryu*; with whom he collaborated to develop two *fukyu* kata in 1940.

Nagamine was born in 1907. In his book, he says his life in karate began at the age of seventeen. Plagued with ill health during his childhood, he turned to karate under his neighbor, **Chojin Kuba**, and a self-imposed diet to improve his health. He later interned at a school in Shuri under the direction of **Shimabuku Taro**, then earned the tutelage of **Arakaki Ankichi**, until Arakaki's death in 1927.

After serving in the Japanese artillery after High School, **Nagamine** became a police officer assigned to the Kadena Police Station from 1931, which enabled him to take instruction from **Kyan Chotoku**. Later, while attending the Metropolitan Police Academy, he studied under **Motobu Choki**, who **Nagamine** considered "one of the greatest karatemens of Okinawa." He continued to serve as a Police Officer during World War II, until the surrender in 1945, after which he was reduced to doing odd jobs for the wounded in a hospital in the rear.

After finding a copy of **Funikoshi's** book, *Karate-do Kyohan*, he determined to take the "way of Karate". He eventually opened his own dojo and named his style *Matsubayashi-ryu* or *Pine Forest* style to honor Matsumura Sokon, ancestor of Shuri-te, and also because his own nickname was "Tenacious Pine Tree." He continued to train and teach regularly until his death in 1997, at the age of 90. His son and heir, **Nagamine Takayoshi** died at a very early age, and the style began to fragment into competing factions, of which there are perhaps a half-dozen major ones in the world today.

SHOBAYASHI-RYU

The *Shobayashi-ryu*, or "Young Forest Style" of *Shorin-ryu* was created by **Shimabuko** (or **Shimabukuru**) **Eizo**, who was born in 1925, the younger brother of *Issinryu* founder **Shimabuku Tatsuo**. Like most students of the period, **Shimabuko** studied under several instructors, first **Miyagi Chojun** in *Goju-ryu*, from which he learned *Sanchin* and *Seienchin* kata. After training briefly with **Motobu Choki**, in 1941, **Shimabuko** began studying with elderly **Kyan Chotoku**, as well as his brother **Tatsuo**. He also studied *kobudo* - Okinawan weapons - under **Taira Shinken**.

Shimabuku taught at the U.S. Marine Corps' Camp Hansen, which brought many American students to his dojo. One note-worthy student was **Joe Lewis**, former tournament and full-contact karate champion. **Shimabuku** was a strong supporter of full-contact sparring, using *bogu*, or body armor.

Shimabuku was promoted to 10th *Dan, Hanshi*, at a very young age, primarily due to politics. He continued to study under other instructors in order to improve his karate. He passed away on October 22, 2017 at the age of 92.

SUKKUNAIHAYASHI

Yet another branch of *Shorin-ryu* is *Sukkunaihayashi*, founded by **Shimabukuro Zenryo** (1908-1969), one of **Kiyan Chotoku's** senior students. *Sukkunaihayashi* is a mixture of *Shuri-te* and *Tomari-te*, as taught in the **Kiyan** lineage. Probably because of this, and the fact that the founder, **Zenryo**, and his son, **Zenpo**, were both small men, the style combines agility and speed with an emphasis of strong body twisting to generate power. Another interesting feature is the use of the "three-quarter" punch, which does not turn completely over as taught in most *Shorin-ryu* styles.

According to Clark, **Shimabukuro** used to deliver baked goods in the area where **Kiyan Chotoku** lived, and **Kiyan Chotoku** became his only instructor. Their relationship continued for ten years, until **Kiyan** died in 1945. **Shimabukuro** first taught outside, but finally took a gamble, borrowed the necessary funds, and built his own dojo with help in the construction by many of his students. Teaching both Okinawans and American GIs, his dojo soon became one of the largest in Okinawa. He taught katas *Fukiyu 1-5*, *Seisan*, *Ananku*, *Passai*, *Gojushiho*, *Chinto*, *Kusanku*, and *Wanchin*, as taught by **Kiyan**.

Shimabukuro was a member of the group of *sensei* determined to unify the various branches of *Shorin-ryu*, and was instrumental in setting up the *Okinawa Karate-do United Organization*, which later combined with another organization called *Okinawa Karate Federation*, to become the *All-Okinawa KaraTe Federation*. **Sanimbakuro** became one of the three vice presidents. He died during a trip to Japan in 1969. His son, **Shimabukuro Zenpo**, continued to spread the style, including a very successful trip to the United States in 1969. In addition to the **Kiyan**-based system taught by his father, **Zenpo** had studied under **Nakama Chozo**, one of **Chibana Choshin's** senior students. This helped "round out" his karate education, learning the *Pinan 1-5* and *Naihanchi 1-3* kata.'

Zenpo lived in the U.S. for several years, successfully competing in several karate tournaments in both *kata* and *kumite*. After returning to Okinawa, he established the International *Seibukan Karate-do* Association, but his following in Okinawa was much less than that in America and other countries. Born in 1943, **Zenryo** continues to teach today at the age of 77.

MATSUMURA SEITO SHORIN-RYU

The last *Shorin-ryu* system we will discuss is one which your editor, as well as several other members of KDK, have been exposed to. This is called **Matsumura Seito Shorin-ryu**, the “Matsumura Orthodox” style of the late **Soken Hohan** (1889-1982). **Soken** was supposedly taught the “family style” taught by **Matsumora Sokon**, one of the masters we have previously discussed, but due to **Soken’s** own secrecy and tendency to deceive others about his style, the origin is rather mysterious. Nevertheless, his skills were said to be extraordinary and he was highly respected by some of the major players in Okinawan *karate* at that time.

Matsumura Seito Shorin-ryu primarily utilizes high stances, fast and powerful pinpoint-strikes to vital areas, grappling applications for kata movements and a major emphasis on weapons.

Hohan claimed to be the only student of **Matsumura Nabe**, or “Old Man Matsumura,” the grandson of **Matsumura Sokon**, whose own history is cloaked in misdirection and confusion. Perhaps this is where **Hohan** learned that tendency. At any rate, **Soken** was descended from the highly privileged **Matsumura** family and began training at the age of 13 or 14. This was before **Itosu Yasutsune** introduced *karate* to the Okinawan school system. **Hohan** learned the traditional kata taught in his *family* art, including The *White Crane* system.

Due to the economic depression of the 1920’s, many Okinawans moved to Japan, others traveled in other directions, including Taiwan and Hawaii, and in **Hohan’s** case Argentina. He remained in Argentina until 1952, when he returned to Okinawa. Having been gone more than 20 years, he was amazed at the changes in *karate*, with Japanese influence becoming more powerful and moving *karate* further away from its original martial arts roots toward sport and pastime. He was unused to the separate styles, the rank structure and many other aspects that had taken place in his absence.

Sokon opened his own dojo in 1956, saying he did so because the old traditions and teachings were being lost. He was quite open-minded about who he taught, including Americans, who were frequently refused by *karate* instructors due to remaining ill feelings about the War. He was quickly accepted and respected by the senior masters in Okinawa and was prominent in demonstrations and ceremonial occasions.

Sokon was encouraged, and effectively ordered by the *Dai Nippon Butokukai* and the *Zen Okinawa Karate-do Renmi* to change his style to conform to the “new norms” of *karate*. To do so, **Sokon** turned to one of his senior students, **Kise Fusei**, who helped him systemize and spread the system of *Matsumura Seito Shorin-ryu*. Kise himself was also an accomplished martial artist, having received black belts from several styles, including **Okinawa Kenpo**, which was a hard style - the direct opposite of what **Sokon** had been teaching. In his book, Clark discusses the **Sokon-Kisei** relationship in some

detail, so we will omit that here, but in 1977, **Kisei** left **Sokon's** organization and formed his own, *Kenshin Kan Shorin-ryu*. Your editor had the honor of attaining a Shodan promotion for one of **Kisei's** students in 1975.

Sokon had several other important students, including **Aragaki Seiki**, **Kuda Yuichi** and **Nishihira Kosei**. Although there were many other variations of *Shorin-ryu*, I feel these are the ones which have been more visible to us as American karateka. In the next issue, we will begin our look at *Naha-te* and its derivatives, **Goju-ryu**, **Uechi-ryu** and others.

As we close this issue, I encourage you - as always- to continue training, in spite of how busy your life may become, despite all the distractions of life itself. Train for fitness, for a release of tension, for your own pride and self-esteem, but most of all, to perpetuate the Esoteric Principles on which the Kodokan Yūdōshakai was founded. Goodbye for this time.

