

# KODENKAN YUDANSHAKAI

## ATARASHI DENTO

Paul Haber, Shihan, editor

NEW TRADITIONS

December 2024

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A Newsletter serving Members and Associates of the Kodenkan Yudanshakai in the traditions of Professor Henry Seishiro Okazaki, and Dai- Shihan Joseph Holck.

Welcome to the newsletter dedicated to you, the member or associate of the Kodenkan Yudanshakai.



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**CORRECTION AND APOLOGY**- In the last issue, we profiled John Truman, Shihan. When I mentioned his ranks, I mistakenly stated he held the rank of Professor in the Ordonez Kajukenbo Ohana. His correct rank is now Grandmaster. My apologies and congratulations, John!

## What's New?

9/14/2024 - At the\_KDK Board of Directors Meeting, the following Yudansha upgrades were recommended:

- Casey Lange to Nidan in Matsuno Kajukenbo Kai with title of Sensei
- Chris Carter to Godan in Matsuno Ryu Goshinjitsu with the title of O'Sensei
- Benito Pimenta to Sandan in Danzan Ryu
- Jose Solorio to Yondan in Danzan Ryu
- Jose Solorio to Sandan in Shorin Ryu
- Shawn Pursell to Shodan in Kajukenbo
- Anthony Durazo to Nidan in Kajukenbo with the title of Sensei

Congratulations to each and every one of you.

9/7-8/2024 - **Senior Clinics** were held in Kodenkan Center and MATS, respectively. 10 students attended on Saturday, September 7. They were taught Shorin Ryu Karate by O'Sensei Dave Lindsey; Shihan Jackie Britt taught a class on testing procedures for rank promotion. On Sunday, September 8, 11 students attended and received instruction in ne waza (groundwork) by Sensei George Seely and how to escape a rear grab by Sensei Randa Kutob.

10/6/2024 - **Kodenkan Yudanshakai Family Picnic** took place at McCormick Park, 2950 N Columbus Avenue. Yudansha, students and families enjoyed pizza, potluck and more. 36 intrepid budoka and families braved the 104-degree temperature. Those attending were able to see people they had not seen very often. Shihan Jackie Britt especially appreciated the contingent from Kodenkan Sierra Vista Budokai for making the trip and participating in the fun.

## *MEET THE SENSEI*



David M. Lovitt, Shihan, was born in Tucson and graduated from the University of Arizona in 1965 with a bachelor's degree in business. He received a Bronze Star for service in the U.S. Army as

an Infantry Officer in Vietnam from 1965-1967. He began his insurance career in 1968 with his father's agency, D.M. Lovitt and Company, and has built a solid reputation over the past 50 years as a professional insurance counselor. He recently sold his insurance agency to Assured Partners of Arizona and continues to work with the new owner.

David is a past member of the National Association of Life & Health Underwriters, a certified Life Underwriter (CLU), a life member of the Million Dollar Round Table and a member and past president of the independent Insurance Agents & Brokers of Tucson.

His community activities include serving on the board of Directors for Boys and Girls Clubs from 1980 to 2017 (President in 1988) and currently Tucson Botanical Gardens (President in 2008-2009). David is a member of the Tucson Rotary Club and the Tucson Airport Authority. In the past he has been involved in numerous non-profit organizations including The Tucson Symphony Board of Directors, Southern Arizona Leadership Council, Big Brother & Big Sister Advisory Board, and the Red Cross Board of Directors.

David has been the recipient of numerous awards throughout his career. Most recently he was awarded the Paul H. Jones Agent of the Year Award by the Independent Insurance Agents & Brokers of Arizona, 2008. Past Awards include the National Quality Award for Life Insurance, Father of the Year, 2002, Dynamic Duo, 2005, and the Spirit of Philanthropy Award, 2007.

David is married to Gail, and they have two married daughters and 3 grandchildren. His activities of interest include running, swimming, cycling, scuba diving, martial arts, and photography.

While accomplishing all this, Shihan Lovitt is the only remaining member of the original Kodokan of Tucson, founded by Roy Holck in 1961, which amounts to more than 63 years of martial arts experience. In addition to attaining master rank in Danzan-ryu Jujutsu, Shihan Lovitt has also earned high ranks in both Matsuno Ryu Goshinjutsu and Kajukenbo.

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## *UPCOMING EVENTS*

12/8/24- The annual **KDK Holiday Party and Potluck** will take place at MATS at 12:30 PM. All are welcome, including kids. Just a reminder- only adults can participate in the gift exchange. Come and party.

1/25/25- **Promotion Ceremony and Banquet**- will be held at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Tucson in Goddard Hall. Times are:

Doors open 3:45

Photos 4:00

Ceremony 5:00

Banquet 6:00

1/26/25- **Annual Black Belt Meeting** will take place at 9:00 AM at MATS . This is for all Yudansha- don't miss it!

2/1/25 – **Board of Directors meeting**

2/2/25- **Quarterly Kyu Testing**- 1100- 3:00 at MATS

2/28/25 - 3/2/25- **Kyu Training Clinics**- time and location TBD

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## KANJI KORNER

By David Heacock, Shihan



This time around we are going to look at two topics: whether there is a Japanese equivalent to the Hawai'ian concept of Ohana, and the difference between the Okinawan and Japanese use of the term *kara* in Karate.

### ‘OHĀNA

Professor Okazaki spent most of his life immersed in the Hawai'ian culture, with its Polynesian tradition of extended family group-based mutual support. At the same time, his Japanese ancestral roots gave him a connection to both Shintō and Confucian ideals with their emphasis on multigenerational ties, extending even beyond the grave. One can easily see how the notion of ‘Ohāna would come to be fundamental to the organizations perpetuating his teachings—both physical and moral.

The Hawai'ian word 'Ohāna means family, a notion that includes all relatives by blood, adoption, and intention. It is derived from the root word 'ohā the taro plant, the “staple of life.” It is in the intentional sense that Prof. Okazaki's martial arts descendants are charged with holding and passing on the idea of a family, related to one another as well as to future students primarily in the spirit of his Esoteric Principles.

The closest Japanese equivalent is kazoku (家族 house, residence, family, lineage + tribe, clan, band) translated as: household, family members, folks. Seen in a larger context, there is daikazoku (大家族) extended family, large family.

As inheritors of the Kodankan Yudanshakai of Prof. Joseph Holck and of the Esoteric Principles, we may consider ourselves 'Ohāna by being ichimon (一門 one + gate, branch of learning based on the teachings of a single master): that is, family, clan, kin; and even adherents, follower, disciples. To do so makes all members of the Kodankan Yudanshakai, as well as related organizations, ichizoku (一族) in the spirit of aloha.

#### IS IT KARATE OR KARATE?

唐手 China (Tang Dynasty) Hand

空手 Empty Hand

The origins of the people of the Ryukyu Islands is uncertain; their remains are known from as far back as about 32,000 years ago. The earliest inhabitants are thought to have come from or through China—possibly by land bridge during the era when ice age conditions meant much lower seas than present; later settlers included Austronesians, Micronesians, and ancient Japanese. The deep origins of modern *karate* come from indigenous fighting arts known simply as *Ti* (Japanese, *Te*); other influences came from India and China.

Once trade relationships between the early Ryukyu Dynasty of King Satto and the Ming Dynasty were formalized in 1372 CE, Chinese citizens who moved to the islands to serve as government officials or to engage in business taught their martial arts forms to the upper classes. The major trading and imperial centers of Shurī, Tomari, and Naha were the most fertile grounds for the development of *Ti*. The policy of banning weapons among the general population (!) in 1477 CE and subsequent invasion by the Shimazu clan of Satsuma Domain in 1609 CE stimulated the development of so-called unarmed combat methods. These especially involved native farming and fishing implements. Examples include: the tonfa mill wheel handle, the nunchaku segmented grain threshing flail, the eku boat oar, the sai hand trident, originally a planting tool, the bō wooden walking staff, and the kama grain sickle. Though now usually taught as a separate art (kobudō), they were once part of overall martial expertise.

Japan formally annexed the Ryukyu Kingdom in 1872 CE. While other teachers had preceded him, Gichin Funakoshi (founder of Shōtō Ryū, “pine wave system”) is credited with introducing and popularizing karate in Japan in the second decade of the 1900s. During the 1930s, a rise in Japanese militarism and attacks against Korea and China, led him to change the *karā* symbol from “China” to “empty” and replace the names of many kata with their Japanese equivalents. It has been

variously said that he did so in order to avoid the misconception that karate was merely the product of Chinese boxing styles, or that by doing so he hoped to have karate accepted by the national budō organization Dai Nippon Butoku Kai.



空手 Empty Hand

唐手 China (Tang Dynasty) Hand

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## EDITOR'S EDGE

In our last issue, we discussed the origins of Karate and the influence that Chinese Boxing had on the indigenous Okinawan fighting systems, which then developed into the early systems of Karate. It's important to remember that until the Twentieth Century there were no **styles**, as we know them today. Students would, over the course of years, study under several Sensei, perhaps learning only one kata, or some bunkai, before moving on to another teacher.

This time let's start taking a look at the first of the three **types** of what has become Karate-do. We'll start with what is believed to be the oldest of the three- the Shuri-te/ Shorin-ryu lineage. First of all, though, let's agree on just one question...What Is Karate?

According to Christopher M. Clarke, noted Karate historian and author in his book *Okinawan Karate: A History of Styles and Masters, Volume 1: Shuri-te and Shorin-ryu*, "At its simplest, Karate is a system of unarmed self-defense first developed on the Island of Okinawa. It utilizes a variety of punching, striking, blocking, kicking, **throwing and joint-locking techniques**." (Emphasis mine). As we know, the current kanji for karate means "Empty Hand." This wasn't always the case; in fact, it wasn't always called Karate - but we'll get to that later.

As we discussed last time, Okinawa was a hub for trade and travel in East Asia, due to its central location between present-day Vietnam, Thailand and the empires of China and Japan. In 1392, the Chinese emperor sent 36 families to Okinawa as emigrants to Okinawa. Some of these undoubtedly studied Chinese Boxing in some form, and this is believed to be one of the early sources of our karate.

For most of its history, Okinawa was a tributary of China, which continued for quite some time even after the Japanese Shimazu clan of the Satsuma Domain invaded the Ryuku Kingdom in April 1609. According to Wikipedia, on that date, three thousand men and more than one hundred war junks sailed from Kagoshima on the southern tip of Kyushu, the southern-most island of Japan.

After the Japanese invasion in 1609, although the Japanese were the nominal rulers, Okinawa remained a vassal kingdom of China. Each new king was subject to the approval of the Chinese Emperor, and during the 17th century, the kingdom was both a tributary of China and a vassal of Japan. The Japanese allowed this situation in order to continue Japanese trade with China, since China would only allow trade with tributary nations, and Japan was eager to continue the trade. During this period, various Chinese went to Okinawa for trade and diplomatic purposes, and Okinawans traveled to China for the same reasons. This continued until Japan claimed Okinawa as a vassal state in 1872.

Okinawa was disarmed in the 15<sup>th</sup> century by the Okinawan king Sho Shin, and again after the invasion by the Japanese Satsumi clan in 1609, who banned sword ownership by commoners. This led to the development of the Indigenous fighting art they called Te or Ti (or Di in Uchinaaguchi, the language of Okinawa.)

One of the Okinawans who learned this art was Sakugawa Kanga, called Sakagawa Tode (Chinese Hands). He is one of the first to combine Ti with the Chinese arts. Sakugawa left behind several kata, including Kusanku (Kwanku) and a bo kata - Sakugawa no kun. He is believed to have been in the service of the king and went to China on what is believed to be a diplomatic mission. Without him, the karate world would never have had his student, the famous Matsumura Sokon.

Since there were few written records kept at that time, no one really knows exactly when Matsumura was born, but he was born in the Shuri region, around 1800 and lived to be 80 or 90. He was from a well-to-do family and began his study of Ti at a very early age and became a live-in student of Sakugawa, from whom he learned a number of empty-hand forms and Sakugawa no kun.

He is also believed to have had a place working for the king and traveled to China several times on royal business. During these trips, he sought out and learned from several teachers of various types of Chuan-fa (Chinese Boxing). He later learned Jigen-ryu jutsu, a method using a short stick, while serving in Japan. His skill earned him the title or nickname, "Bushi" or warrior and the position of chief bodyguard to the Okinawan king.

As Matsumura began teaching, he included these arts in what he taught his students. One of the famous masters descended from Bushi Matsumura was Itosu Yatsusune, or Itosu Anko, the founder of what was called Shuri-te and the man who introduced Tode into the Japanese school system. We'll learn about him next time.

"Enjoy your training!"