



SHINKI NEWS

NO. 22



Onegai shimasu

Editorial

Text: Lukas Underwood

Dear members,

the darn 2020 is drawing to a close. This year has demanded a lot from all of us. This issue of Shinki News is also about Corona and so it looks different than what you are used to. Since there were hardly any seminars this year, there is only one seminar report in the edition, but two leading articles deal with the topic of „Aikido and other martial arts.“

After Sensei's comments, Johannes Hofmann opens up with his experiences on encounters with practitioners of other martial arts. Below, you will find an article from me that compares Aikido as a system with other systems and pleads for a new self-confidence. Then, finally, you will find the only seminar report that tells you about the 2020 summer course in Oldenswort. Claudia Buder then formulated some thoughts on various topics, but also on the engagement in our association, which leads to the announcement of the results of the 2020 commission elections.

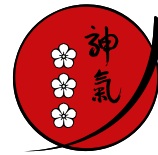
We at Shinki News want to thank everyone who got involved in the elections, either by providing the technical facilities so that we could all vote from the comfort of our own homes, or by making organizational contributions. We would also like to thank all members who stepped forward as candidates and showed that they are ready to take on responsibility. Finally, of course, we would like to thank everyone who voted.

We hope that, despite these special conditions, you all will have nice and quiet days; and, we wish you a happy new year.

The editorial staff of the Shinki News

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Soke's Word

Text: Michael Daishiro Nakajima

One of the first words I learned in German class was “vacation.” Both my friend, who came to Germany with me, and I were a little amazed. Because we didn’t know yet that holidays played such a big role in this country.

We didn’t take many vacations in Japan back then. My friend and I said there was no need for such a thing as a vacation. **It was only over time that I understood that vacation is a social achievement and important for human beings.**

However, it is not a given that you can take a vacation. In poorer countries you have to work all the time to survive. And now, in the time of the rampant Coronavirus, the so-called systemically important people in rich countries have to toil hard. There can be no such thing as a vacation.

There is a long way to go before everyone can enjoy their holidays. Maybe it’s just a dream. But especially those who are on the sunnier side of life should not simply accept that the majority of humanity “does not take

a vacation.” I read a piece of advice in a book that you shouldn’t take a special rest, but rather create variety in your work. That is, if you get tired at one job, then you should take on another activity that needs to be done. This advice mitigates the situation if there is no other way, but it is not a fundamental solution. At some point you are tired from all the work and need a “vacation.”

I have already spoken of Bunbu Ryodo [to be skilled in both literary and martial arts], several times in the past. It’s not just about martial arts and it’s not just about culture either. Both have to go hand in hand. But the term “Bun” is indeed culture in the broadest sense, but actually includes everything that is not a martial art, **especially when you think of the original meaning of Samurai, namely service, it becomes clear that Bun also includes social commitment, especially when the need is great. And the need in our world is great.**

Those who just comfortably practice martial arts are far from being Samurai.

Remarks

Bokuto: I found financially better ways to get a Bokuto (wooden sword) from my old friend, Mrs. Yumiko Kôno, who runs the Sinonome Budo shop in Mie Prefecture in Japan. Not only is the sword, itself, cheaper (with the same quality), but it also comes with a better type of shipment. The first six customers already benefited greatly from this. However, there is a big problem with the wood (white oak) in Japan, such that the price has increased drastically, which affects not only our shop but all Budo shops in Japan. Ms. Kono tries to keep the price increase within limits by purchasing a large amount. Therefore, I will try to order many swords at once so that you can order a Bokuto from me at any time. However, at the moment (because of the difficult procurement of the wood) it takes a while until the next shipment arrives. I was told that it might be until next spring. When the time comes, I'll notify you. I guess, despite the price increase, it will still be less than the other deal so far. There should be more red oak and therefore cheaper. We'll see.

Articles

Notes



Other Martial Arts Guest on the Mat

Text: Johannes Hoffmann

Aikido is part of martial arts. Much is similar, some different, and in some forums, the question of which is the best martial art is discussed heatedly and in vain. Aikido often gets criticized. Of course, there are good reasons not to even get involved in such comparisons. In my perception, the prerequisites and framework conditions are so different that, in the end, the skills of the people involved are compared more than the martial art that they represent.

Dealing with other martial arts can still do no harm, because at one point we cannot hide. In Shinki, if we emphasize that the execution must be effective in combat, then this claim also applies in the encounter with other martial arts. Part of it is that you can fail with your own standards.

For me, the question is not which art is better, but what can be learned from each martial art. So far, I have had two opportunities to train on the mat with guests from other martial arts.

My first encounter was a few years ago. At that time, when I was still in another club and had just gotten promoted to 5th kyu, a beginner stood before me on the mat: tall, broad-shouldered, formidable. He showed up because his plan was to open a martial arts school and to teach all martial arts, to include Aikido.

During training, it was clear that he had experience on the mat. He moved quickly and pulled through properly - whether attacking or throwing. A lot looked strange and felt harder than with my trusted partners from the dojo. I was amazed at how quickly someone who had never done Aikido could implement a Shiho-nage so compellingly. No chance to turn out or escape. And in the end, I was always afraid of landing safely, because he threw me over his shoulder and, from there, I fell from a great height, because he was very tall. I survived. And that is one of the insights I gained in the encounter: although I was already happy when the forward roll worked halfway and only knew the

free fall from watching, what my body had been practicing, up until then, was enough to make you strong enough to survive a Shiho-nage typhoon.

Conversely, I was hardly able to move him. Of course, my teacher, at the time, came to the rescue, explaining to him that he should let himself be guided and that this is not about sparring, but it was about a common movement. Of course he also improved a few things for me. After that it went better - but it remained sobering and I suddenly felt very lost with my Aikido, which I had been so proud of.

What I still remember was the intransigence in which he carried each technique through to the end. His goal was to fix me hard on the ground, and I felt that hardness throughout. I tried to explain that Aikido is not about strength and opposing one another, but it was about accepting the opponent and thereby ending the fight. His answer was, "No mercy. Whoever attacks me deserves no mercy."

I learned a lot about Aikido and myself that evening. He probably did too. He didn't come back.

The second visit was less than a year ago. In the meantime, I was in my own Shinki Dojo and was a 1st Kyu. Our guest was a Krav Maga student. His teacher advised him to look at other martial arts and whether he could train with us twice.

He was very respectful and went to great lengths to do things as is customary for us (his teacher had advised him to do this). Still, I and probably Alexander, who led the training, were a bit excited. Are we doing justice to the encounter? Are we and our young dojo good enough? Can we show, in two sessions, what constitutes Aikido and Shinki? Is what we always say true: It's Budo and has to be effective in combat? Aikido vs Krav Maga? Years after this experience, will I be sobering off the mat again as a 1st kyu?

I could have saved myself from excitement. It turned out to be two good workouts. We had a lot of fun together, if only because it was nice to have a new partner on the mat who was not Aikido-conditioned, but attacked well and could be thrown without hesitation. At the end of the second session, we asked him to show us a little something from Krav Maga. The techniques we did weren't that different at first. A big difference, however, was the weighting of the degree, the clear and effective fixation on the floor, every time, and in many variants: knees on the head, knees on the neck, elbows on the back with the knee...

I would like to tell you the two experiences that I received, as a gift, during this training:

Firstly, he couldn't do anything with Katate-dori. He held my wrist and asked why we were doing this. This was not a sensible attack. I said, "Your goal is to prevent me from drawing my sword." His next attack was quick and convincing - my drop and Sabaki flowed smoothly into Irimi-nage. I was totally amazed at how smooth and harmonious the encounter went. Mind you, not on the tenth round with a trusted training partner who has been training Aikido for ten years, but with a stranger from another martial art on the second attack.

At some point, later, we got into sparring while practicing. He looked for my openings (and found them too), came back quickly, and brought me into distress. I tried to keep moving, to take out strength, which I managed to do worse with increasing tension. He wanted to know - and I realized that I had no chance to show him. I opted to quit. One last Sabaki - I don't remember what came next. But he was on the ground, me with a nikyo above him. After a moment he nodded approvingly. I gave him my hand and pulled him up.

Looking back, both encounters showed me how much Aikido is physical learning. We tend to combine learning with the mind. But, here, my body knew what to do because it had practiced it often enough - only my head got in the way at first. If I wanted to prove something, I failed. My image of Aikido (and of myself), the knowledge of how a technique has to work, and my fears - all of the blocks - made me realize that I am not really open and free to meet them. But if I manage to let go, my body is actually better than expected. This makes me confident and, hopefully, makes it easier for me to let go in the future.

I also realized, once again, how important a good attack is. Both attacks were able to do that and I have great respect for the seriousness with which they impacted on the encounter, again and again. At the same time, it became clear to me at this point why I do Aikido, and where my posture differs. I don't want to go into battle with the aim of nailing Uke to the ground in the end. It's not for me to train strength against strength. I prefer to keep practicing letting go.



Text: Johannes Hoffmann

Aikido is Useless – or A Plea for a New Self-confidence

Text: Lukas Underwood

ICHI – Introduction

I personally find hardly a topic more boring than the eternal discussion about whether Aikido is suitable for combat or not. Nevertheless, we are confronted with this question, again and again: be it in martial arts forums, in conversation with other martial artists or when beginners come to training. Representatives of other disciplines, in particular, always agree relatively quickly about this statement: “Aikido doesn’t work!” This agreement is fueled, again and again, by the fact that videos appear at irregular intervals showing how an aikidoka is dominated by a wrestler or an MMA Fighter is better on the mat or in the ring. One of the most frequent counter-arguments used in Aikido in support is that the Aikidokas always enter the terrain of others, which means of course, an MMA practitioner is better than the Aikidoka under MMA conditions, after all, he trains exactly the skill set that is required of him under these specific conditions. While there is something to this explanation, the question arises, what exactly does Aikido train? After all, the Aikidoka from videos go into a confrontation with the belief that they can certainly exist in it. In none of the three examples I cited were Aikidoka taken by surprise or forced into sparring against their will.

In the following I would like to use the question of functionality as an example to approach a characteristic of Aikido. I would like to investigate the question of what exactly Aikido is and advocate taking the simplest answer seriously - a martial art. Then the question should be asked what the function of Aikido is or, in other words, whether Aikido training is useful. My thesis, which I would like to discuss, is that Aikido as it is practiced in most dojos today is useless, but that this is where the great strength lies.

Ni – Martial Arts not Plastic

When I started with Aikido, I was undoubtedly passionate about martial arts and was combat oriented. In addition to Aikido, I also trained in Karate and, later, a mixture of different things geared towards effectiveness that had no name (today it would be called a self-defense (SD) hybrid, but I think my trainer simply had experience in pubs). My

goal was to learn to defend myself in an emergency and I also had a lot of fun fighting. Actually, to be completely honest, I had no interest in Karate or Aikido - I liked martial arts romance as it was depicted in the action films (although it was more like Ninja Turtles and Power Rangers for me) and I felt like doing it physically intensely „, to deal with „, - in other words, when sparring it was allowed to rattle a lot. Aikido was always there, not least because of my father, but I quickly noticed that I couldn’t implement anything of what I had learned in Aikido training in the regular sparring sessions. I believe that the vast majority of aikidoka who step into the ring for the first time will have this experience. In my experience, most of them assume, as I did back then, that they can implement what they have practiced in training one-on-one in “real combat.” Say, take the blow easily and gently guide the attacker to the ground. They simply believe that Aikido enables them to fight and, if that is the case, then they have to work with e.g., a boxer: being able to keep up. After all, we practice handling punches all the time in training. But that doesn’t work and that is mainly due to the fact that Aikido is not a martial art (MA) and also not a self-defense (SD) system. You could also put it differently - Aikido is not made to fight a fight and that has reasons that are best visible if you choose MA and SD as a contrast.

Martial arts have a clear goal. They are trained to exist within a fixed framework of rules against another person and to defeat them. In the end there is a winner and a loser. In order to achieve this goal, a skill set must be developed that is suitable for dealing with different types of opponents: indoor types, and at the same time building a level of physical fitness that, on the one hand, helps protect the body (muscles, etc., intercept the hits) and, on the other hand, develops a condition that allows one to survive several rounds in the ring. For this, you have to train hard several times a week and it has to be shown, especially in the fight with others, which techniques, etc., work for the individual fighter: which work and which do not. These are then refined and honed and different tactics are practiced against different opponents.

The SD pursues a different goal. There is no fixed set of rules here, the confrontations can endanger life, at the latest when weapons are involved. Since the trainees should be prepared as quickly as possible for an emergency, they learn straightforward techniques that use the entire legal framework in order to survive. Therefore, you have to practice under the most realistic conditions possible: that is, sparring under extreme stress conditions. The fight must be decided as quickly as possible and the winner is the one who gets out of the situation the least injured. Since, in case of doubt, there can be legal consequences for the confrontation, the SD system should convey at least rudimentary legal knowledge, for example which behavior is covered by the self-defense paragraph and which is not.

This rough and necessarily incomplete outline of the characteristics of MA and SD should make it clear that MA and SD training differ significantly from our Aikido training. Both types of learning to fight will teach the practitioner one thing in a reasonable amount of time: fighting. This is because that is exactly what they are practicing. Again and again it goes into the ring, again and again techniques are reduced etc. until what is finally left is what is useful for the purpose. The systems must also develop over time and based on social changes. This is particularly shown by an example from the SD: in the USA, the use of firearms in a dispute is much more likely to happen than in Germany. A civil SD system in the USA should therefore prepare for the confrontation with weapons or, simply, practice dealing with legal weapons.

Aikido does not do any of that - it therefore cannot compete with MA or SD systems on these levels. It has no obvious use from that perspective. But that is not a problem, the problem arises when students are sold a different expectation. Then videos are created like the ones listed as examples. It's actually very simple: a swimmer: who makes swimming movements every day on land, and masters them excellently, will look around

quite nicely if he / she is suddenly thrown into the sea and has to fight against wind and waves . Aikido is like this swimmer. Of course it conveys ideas about how a physical confrontation could go and also gives tools to defend oneself, but it doesn't teach how to use these tools properly. It would be no problem to change that. It would be easy to modernize the outdated forms of attack and to do sparring with protective gear, etc., in order to have a more or less effective and modern Aikido in the end. But why bother? So that Aikido can be effectively represented in the UFC in the end? I don't think anyone is really interested in that. Rather, it's probably about recognition in the martial arts community as a serious martial art. So if Aikido has no practical use, the question naturally arises whether you shouldn't just train something different and let Aikido fall into oblivion. My answer to that is: no!

SAN – Uselessness as Gain

Friends approach me, again and again, and ask me if they can come to train with me, they want to learn a form of self-defense. I usually refer my friends to a Krav Maga Gym here on the corner or to a Tai Box Club where a lot of friends train. When people then ask me why I do Aikido, when I am of the opinion that Aikido is not a system suitable for combat, I am usually at a loss for words, because conveying what I see in Aikido is difficult to explain. The misunderstanding starts with the fact that a system of categories is applied to something that eludes it. This essentially has something to do with the fact that Aikido is a martial art. This term differs from martial arts not only because it is not a sport, but also because of an inherent logic. Just like the work of art that can point beyond the current social relationship, the martial art is not stuck in the current social formation. Therefore, Aikido does not have to adapt its attacks to be modern - the martial art does not deal with the content of the modern world, the practitioners just do this and cannot shake it off. The problem therefore does not lie in Aikido as a martial art system, but in the practitioners who believe that Aikido has to function or has to be

useful within modern social categories. However, the demand that (martial) art should be useful for something is just as absurd as the demand that it should break away from current society.

However, if Aikido is stripped of these modern demands, something remains that is useless and that is precisely why it offers immense potential. In this way a space is created that is open to interpretation, which actually defies the logic of our everyday life because it is opposed to it in its functionality. This useless nothing can then be developed in training and in different directions. Of course, this does not mean that Katha does not teach things that would be useful in concrete everyday situations, including physical disputes. When I hitchhiked through England, 15 years ago, with my girlfriend at the time and was attacked by seven youngsters at the bus station in Nottingham at night, thanks to my Aikido training and my ex-girlfriend's pepper spray, we got out of the scuffle safely, because we could escape - but no, I neither used a technique, nor distributed blows, nor sprayed clouds of pepper. The strength of Aikido lies precisely in not focusing on self-defense or fighting in the ring, but rather leaves the practitioner the space to practice things just to practice them. The decisive factor is how we fill the space that is given to us through Aikido, with content and all forms are justified as long as they are honest

with themselves and also train what they claim to be the focus of. I understand Aikido as an empty space that each individual can set up according to his / her needs - but that also means that we have to actively design this space. We are not given what the room should look like, even if we can orient ourselves on the furnishings of others. Aikido is useless and that is the great strength that, I think, makes it so valuable.



Text: Lukas Underwood

Seminar Reports

Replacement summer seminar Oldenswort

With Duncan Underwood / 29.06./01.07./03.07.2020

Text: Christina Ahrens

2020 is very different.

This also applies to our seminars, our weekly training - our everyday life.

Duncan thought long, waited, and hoped until he made the decision to give a replacement summer seminar this year.

Instead of a week, there were only three afternoons of training; instead of being held in the hall, the course took place outside; instead of offering Aikido and Shinki Toho, Shinki Toho was trained exclusively; instead of having all our friends with us, only the Schleswig-Holsteiners were there.

A condensed version of what we know. That's why it was a replacement summer seminar...

But:

It was more than just a substitute!

We trained intensively with everyone - in thought - diligently.
Thank you for your emails and kind words! In spite of everything, you were with us.

It was incredible at Maike's farm. This naturalness in which we were allowed to practice.

We trained with the wind; we had to face the sun, the rain, and ourselves.

We talked about the difference between meditating and exercising indoors and outdoors.

Whether something is lost when you do not have space that limits one, or whether the space that limits you takes something away from you.

Outdoors, there were many more distractions and adversities to face. But it was also a much more natural environment than it was in the hall.

In the hall, the ground is level and there is no wind that almost knocks you over or where things could suddenly get in the way.

There is no comparison. We were lucky enough to have both experiences.

In any case, it was definitely enriching!

And for that, we are very grateful for everyone who made this possible for us.

On Friday, even a calf was born.

In addition to meditating next to the cows, the wind, the rustling of the leaves, the kittens that snuggled up to us during meditation - there was actually no more natural and better environment.

Because all these things were there, all of us had to tune them out.

The content of the whole seminar was intense, sharp, and clear.

You all know seminars - everyone takes away different things for themselves and everyone has their own perception.

For me, during this seminar, I once again learned how important it is to listen and learn.

Hear what the teacher says - without comments.

Practice - regardless of the circumstances, whether the sun is shining, the rain is getting heavier, or the ground is uneven. Concentration.

Let go and give everything.

Not only the techniques - Duncan wanted us to connect with our sword, to become one with it.

To do this, we should not only know the different techniques - it is much more important that we master the individual technique, be able to carry it out cleanly - which can take years.

It is not important how much, but how clean and how good.

What concentration, perseverance, and dedication mean.

This is what we practiced. Over and over again. And yet it was always different and new.

Yes, and what I write is - it was also about leaving things out, letting go, and still taking them in.

But this has to happen by itself- quite naturally.

Not waiting, but letting it "simply" happen. We have to "just" accept it.

So, and now, my two favorite words "simple" and "just" have come up again.

They are the words that contain much more than what they actually are.

But maybe not - maybe in the end they are just words.

That was a great seminar and we look forward to seeing you all again soon.



Text: Christina Ahrens

From A to B

Text: Claudia Buder

From A to B
What a picture! At the moment it seems surreal, but on January 25th, 2020 it was still very real: an Aiki Budo course with Duncan Underwood in Weimar. Taking up the flowing movement of the mural, we wanted to be totally in oneness with each other.

Where is our oneness now?
Hiked from A to B?
Aikido? Budo?

Our practice has changed. What do we practice? How do we practice?
The external circumstances may change, the task of internal practice remains.

The philosopher and educator Otto Friedrich Bollnow examined these aspects in his book „Vom Geist des Übens“ [The Spirit of Practice].
The Bollnow Society is grateful that you can read it here: https://bollnow-gesellschaft.de/getmedia.php/_media/ofbg/201411/153v0-orig.pdf
The insights are as complex and worthwhile as our lives.



From A to B.

The present time shows that the mat, alone, is not enough for practice. Regardless of whether Aikido or Budo, several components belong to the overall picture of development.

Yes, there are also versatile components to the overall picture of our Shinki community.

Once again, we would like to thank the editorial team of Shinki News: Your actions build the platform for mutual reflection.

While the letters for these lines are being typed, other signs must also be set: At this moment our community is voting for the new election of the commissions (when the result of the vote in Shinki News appears, this moment will already be a thing of the past ...).

When the decision is clear in your head, the voting buttons can be tapped loosely. Click and done!

When I click, I ask myself whether I, as a musician, can even grasp the technical work involved in realizing such a click in the system.

At this point, on behalf of all of us, I would like to especially thank Svenja Clausen and Dennis Uttenwiede, who did the programming for this election in non-countable, hourly work. Domo arigatou!

Not only on the mat, but also next to the mat, everyone does their part to ensure that the community can continue to exist. This must be clear to us, especially in view of the new election. The commissions represent a commonality that is led by our Sensei, Michael Daishiro Nakajima, but which endures through our activities.

From A to B.

Lead and follow.
Planning and implementation.
Think and act.

Our Sensei acts.
His word goes in circles.
Shinki!
We have accompanied Sensei's doctoral thesis and especially heard his words during the seminars.

"In the beginning there was the word." That was the motto of the LIX Convent of the Order of St. George of the Evangelical Brotherhood, to which our Sensei was invited for a lecture on 10.10.2020 in the Augustinian Monastery in Erfurt.

A travels to B.

Sensei's doctoral thesis triggers new encounters.

„Word and love as basic revelations of the divine being“:

With this topic, Nakajima Sensei presented some of the basic ideas of his work.

As diverse as our community.

„Each of you serve one another with the gift he has received.“

(1 Peter 4:10)

In addition to ants and blue birds, our wise men will show what the future will sound like.

Hai!



Text: Claudia Buder

MICHAEL
DAISHIRO NAKAJIMA

Sein – Wort – Liebe

Wort und Liebe als Grundoffen-
barungen des göttlichen Seins –
die theologischen Konsequenzen
des Denkens Ferdinand Ebners

THEOLOGIE IM DIALOG

HERDER



Shinkirengo-Election 2020

Examiners and Trainers Commissions

The election is complete, and an important finding is that there are several things that we need to improve on next time. This will be the topic during the next meeting.

The TK now has six members due to a tie.

The following were elected to the Examiners Commission:

Claudia Buder
Duncan Underwood
Henry Kowallik
Rick Soriano
Bernd Hubl

The following were elected to the Trainers Commission:

Helmut Theobald
Gunnar Clausen
Katrin Reimer
Birgit Smentek
Michael Danner
Danijel Rolli

Promotions

19. August – 19. November 2020

Aikido

9. Kyu

9. Kyu

8. Kyu

7. Kyu

5. Kyu

3. Kyu

Buhr, Niklas

Buhr, Sophie

Krenzer, Lea

Bittner, Nike

Lindenbach, Yves

Roessler, Jens

Rheinbreitbach

Rheinbreitbach

Wi-Sonnenberg

Wi-Sonnenberg

Oberkessach

Oberkessach

Daitoryu Aiki Jujutsu

5. Kyu

4. Kyu

Tischer, Martin

Pötig, Matthias

Großräschen

Cottbus

Seminars

2021

Seminars 2021

- Sat 10. – Sun 18. April 2021** **Hiddensee: Aiki Budo Seminar**
with Petra and Bernd Hubl
- Sat 17. – Sun 18. April 2021** **Landau: Daitoryu Seminar**
with M. D. Nakajima Shihan
- Sat 8. – Sun 9. May 2021** **Bad Segeberg: Aiki Budo Seminar**
with M. D. Nakajima Shihan
- Mon 5. – Sat 10. July 2021** **Oldenswort: Eiderstedter Aiki Budo Summer Seminar**
with Duncan Underwood

Arigato gozaimasu

Preview Shinki News No. 23

The next “small” edition of Shinki News will be published in March 2021.

If you would like to contribute to Shinki News, please submit your contribution(s) to: shinkinews@shinkiryu.de and we will contact you to discuss the formalities.

Have a winter full of Ki!
Shinki News Team.

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Lukas Underwood



Monika Popp



Rick Soriano



Nigel Downes



Johannes Hoffmann



Jann-Volquard Posenauer