



The Bulletin

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The Kano Society

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The Bulletin - Editor's comment

Welcome to the fifth edition of the 'Bulletin' - In this issue we continue the cherry blossom controversy—you may recall that in bulletin three we had a piece on the Kodokan symbol—apparently this has caused argument because it was not a cherry blossom—but the imperial mirror—Professor Waterhouse from Canada sheds some light on the subject. ... This will no doubt be one of those arguments which will go on and on -people seem to get very polarized on their views.

Don't miss the announcement about the next AGM— page four—we hope for a good turnout—so see you there Enjoy your reading— and if you do—think about sending in some articles or comments—email or post will do.

Regards— Diana Birch

Kodokan Emblem Revisited - David Waterhouse

Judoka everywhere are familiar with the emblem of the Kodokan. In the May 1997 issue of the Yudansha Journal, two contrasting explanations of it were presented: from the book *Judo Training Methods: A Sourcebook* (1962), by Takahiko Ishikawa and Donn F. Draeger; and from a 1963 article by Senta Yamada. The editors of Yudansha Journal, reprinting the latter, felt it necessary to add: "This article does not represent the beliefs of Judo Canada. It has been included solely for your interest".

I had never previously thought about the history and meaning of the Kodokan emblem; and Judo Canada's nervousness about associating itself with the explanation given by

Mino - A Straw Cape - John Cornish

Mino, a straw cape. During the Tai-so, Uchi-komi, and Ran-dori on the Sunday Judo training classes at the Budokwai, run by T.P.Leggett He would often quote a saying, or tell us a short story that he used to illustrate a point he wished us to consider.

One story that stuck in my mind *was* one about a famous general out walking with his aide-de-camp. It came on to rain and the pair went into a peasant's hut to borrow a cape made of straw, called a mino. They thought that even the poorest of peasants would have at least one mino for the general's use. There was a young girl in the hut and on hearing the request, without answer, she left the pair for a while and came back and surprised the general by bringing a twig, of a plant called a Yanabuki, carried on an open fan.

The general stormed out of the hut, and all the way back to the castle, railed against the peasant girl that was so lacking in understanding

that, even on a rainy day, couldn't understand the obvious need of a straw cape to keep off the rain. Then when she went on by offering a twig of the Yamabuki, "well it beggars belief" said the general.

The Aide-de-camp waited for the general to cool down and then explained that the girl was using a point from a poem - something like," isn't it sad that the Yamabuki, that has many petals on each of it's flowers, yet has no berries. In Japanese the word for berries is "Mi". The lack of fruit in the poem would be rendered "Mi-no-na?". The lack of a cape would be rendered "Mino-nai".

The general was embarrassed that he knew less about poetry than a poor peasant girl and decided from then on to change his exclusive study of the art of war and make a study of the more gentle and cultured arts as well. The general known as a well versed and cultured man eventually retired from the world of the warrior, and became a monk With the change of life to that of a monk he had a

change of name to Ota Dokwan. T.P. also told us that some martial arts schools insist that the students learn to play a musical instrument, and this is to help prevent the martial art students becoming mere wild fighting animals. T.P. left it to us what art would be suitable to keep us in touch with our humanity.

*"... isn't it sad
that the
Yamabuki, that
has many petals
on each of it's
flowers, yet has
no berries*

On going to Japan, I came across the story of the general and learned more details of the man. His name was Ota no Sukenaga and he was responsible in the 15th Century for building the great castle in Edo. This castle was later taken over by the Tokugawa Shogunate (1603-1868). Then on the Restoration of the Rule of the Emperor (Meiji) (1868) it became the palace of the Emperors, as it is today. Edo at the time of the Restoration (Meiji Ishin) had a change of name to Tokyo.

Senta Yamada suggests that I am not alone. However, a little research proves that Yamada-sensei, a distinguished teacher of both judo and aikido, was basically correct (even if his final comments raise questions); and that Donn Draeger, for many years the foremost Western authority on Japanese and other Asian martial arts, was in this instance wrong. Draeger states in part: "the standard emblem of the Kodokan is an 8 petalled flower of the cherry tree. It was adopted by feudal Samurai because the flower is detached from the branch at the apogee of its beauty in order to die.: In classical Japanese poetry cherry blossom represents the evanescence and fragility of human

life and beauty; and it continued to be a favorite if hackneyed image in Japanese literature, visual art and the theatre. Cherry blossom has other traditional associations in Japan, for example, with the courtesans of the Yoshiwara, and as a euphemism for edible horse meat (which is supposed to be the same shade of pink). Some prominent warrior families adopted a crest-badge based on a stylized cherry blossom; but I cannot discover that it was particularly associated with the samurai before modern times. Draeger may have been influenced by Eugen Herrigel's well-known Zen in the Art of Archery (1953): "It is not for nothing that the Samurai

have chosen for their truest symbol the fragile cherry blossom. Like a petal dropping in the morning sunlight and floating serenely to earth, so must the fearless detach himself from life, silent and inwardly unmoved.: Herrigel's book, first written in 1936, was twice translated into Japanese (1937 and 1940); and at about this time cherry blossom did assume a new significance in Japanese militarist circles. Thus, the Sakurakai, "Cherry Society", was a clique of extremist army officers; and towards the end of World War II cherry blossom (Oka in Sino Japanese) was a potent symbol for the Kamikaze pilots. Manned suicide bombs were called oh jinrai,

Bob Thomas 7th Dan article by Stan Brogan

Bob first became interested in Judo in 1955 when he was seventeen years old. This came about because someone he knew was boasting about his own ability at the sport and invited Bob to come along to his club in Bridgeton. They arranged to meet but the guy did not turn up so Bob went to the club on his own. The first thing he noticed was the strenuous physical activity, which was going on, and this was an inspiring sight. Tam McDermott was the Sensei there and he was urging everyone on. Bob realised very quickly that this was the sport for him. At that time Tam McDermott was the most prominent judoka in Scotland and John Fraser was his very able assistant. Between them, they worked everyone extremely hard. Bob was a member of a group of teenagers between 17-18 years of age and they all practised very hard indeed. All of them without exception took some terrible poundings from the higher grades but this was accepted because they were so keen to learn and improve. Bob recalls going home on after training at weekends and evenings with his kit literally sodden with sweat! He also remembers a divisional curtain being put across the mat, which was to separate high and low grades. Some wag put a notice on the high-grade side, which said, "please do not feed the animals."

In 1961 Bob and some friends went to London in order to continue their judo training. They trained in the Budokwai and Renshuden. Bob attended the famous Budokwai Sunday class many times where the standard was very high. He also recalls the Kofeàn team who went to Paris for the World Championships, calling in to the Budokwai Sunday class to give instruction. The team consisted of Dongbae Kim, Dukyong Kim, Kim en Tae and HanhoSan. Interestingly Bob and Hanhosan met 35 years later in Holland (incidentally neither of us has changed at all!) and the Korean remembered the Sunday class which was run by Trevor Leggett. Hanhosan is now a top trainer in Germany. While at the Budokwai. Despite the fact that Bob was a black belt of the Scottish Judo Association, he was advised by Trevor Leggett that he would have to

black belt and he therefore agreed and attended a grading at the London Judo Society. He remembers the line up that day for Black Belt was eight brown belts and everything had to be done on the day, incidentally two of the brown belts had done their line up for first Dan. There was no points system then!! He got his Black Belt and later returned to the Budokwai ready to practice.

His first success in London was when after eliminations were held at the Renshuden for the British Club Championships. He was selected as first reserve to a strong team, which comprised of international 3rd Dans so Bob was quite flattered to be chosen as 1st reserve. Incidentally this team won the championship.

It is now 1963 and Bob was living in Preston and the same year after eliminations in the KNK Manchester, he was selected for the North West Area team for the Inter Area Championships but unfortunately they were not placed. He is now back in Scotland and it is 1964 and time to enter the eliminations for the Inter Area team and he was successful. At the Crystal Palace after many gruelling contests – the Scottish Team won, beating the British Universities. 4 – 0 in the final. (No weight categories)

The same year he was in the Scottish Team against Holland at the Kelvin Hall in Glasgow where he fought Anton Geesink and lasted 40 seconds including the hold down. The team then consisted of George Kerr, John Young, Jack Cocker and Bob.

It is now 1965 and the Inter Areas crop up again. The Scots team reaches the finals losing to the NEC. Bob got his second Dan that year. And was a member of the Inter Area Team for the next three years. He also recalls the same year he and his friend, Bob Oliver went to Split for a judo competition called the Jadran Cup. The opposition was very strong with a powerful contingent of East Germans attending. The best known were Otto Smirat and Herbert Niemann. Smirat was a Katagiriura specialist and Herbert Niemann was European heavy weight champion of

that year. They were both immensely strong and skilful. The competition was held in Hadjuk, Split's football stadium. Rain stopped play on the Saturday so it was postponed until the Sunday. Bob remembers how friendly the Germans were and Niemann's quiet dignity. They were able to communicate a bit because Bob has a slight knowledge of German.

During the course of the evening an enormous man came over to introduce himself as Brancic – and announced that he and Bob were in the same pool. He squeezed Bob's hand very tightly in an effort to intimidate him and Bob implemented a strategy he had read about in an article by Charles Palmer, during his contest career in Japan i.e. "Friendly and smiling" before the bow viz. DrJekyll, and after the bow – "Mr Hyde." Bob attacked with everything he had and threw Brancic with Tsurikoniigoshe in 90 seconds. Charles Palmer's strategy worked!

Eventually he advanced to the quarter finals where he was held down by Niemann after about four minutes. Bob Oliver fought extremely well, throwing two men with Tsurikoniigoshe. He also advanced to the quarter finals but he lost to a large German called Schulz. Niemann of course won the heavyweight and Smirat won the middleweight. 1966 Promoted to 3rd Dan and also got married (my wife insists I mention this)! There was a line up of 15 and the examiners were George Kerr and Andy Bull. He fought in three home internationals along the way and won the Scottish heavyweight championship twice. In the early 70s Bob

took up refereeing. He has been a National (A) referee for many years, a Senior Examiner and also a member of the Panel of National Kata-judges.

An amusing incident occurred at the Scottish Championships during which he had been promoted to the 6th Dan and George Kerr had presented him with a red and white belt. After that Bob refereed a very contentious final. As he was coming off, he heard a voice saying "Well Bob never got his 6th Dan for his refereeing – that's for sure."

On one occasion while Bob was conducting a Dan grading – one of the contestants had an unusual name. Bob asked the man if his name was Czech and when this was confirmed, Bob said "Well I hope today that you don't become a bounced Czech!" Afterwards when the competitor came for his points card and Bob added the 30 points – he said well I am glad to see that you are still legal currency!!

1990 Bob had his 6th Dan confirmed by Mr Kawaniura at the Kodokan. Mr Kawamura was the teacher of Bob's sensei Mr Tam McDermott. He is currently still refereeing, examining and involved in Kata. Although he has spent over four decades being involved with Judo, he has gained a lot from the discipline and has made many friends he would never have met otherwise. He is grateful for the help, instruction and inspiration he received from judoka in particular of course Tam McDermott and also John Fraser.



Bob Thomas wins with Tsurikomigoshi 1964

Too Little Too Much—Trevor Leggett - part Four 1997

This article is the fourth of a series of pieces by Trevor Leggett which first appeared in magazine form in 1997

In the last article, I explained how I understood from a lecture of Dr. Kano about sixty years ago that most of us are either Too Much men or Too Little men in life. Still later, I saw, or at least I thought I saw, that nations too are mostly Too Much or Too Little nations.

I gave as an example of a Too Much nation the French, and I recalled that in the French Revolution at the end of the 18th century they had executed the King and some 2,000 aristocrats. But they went on executing; they could not stop. Finally they began to execute even their own leaders. Altogether about 30,000 were guillotined. Then about a hundred years after that, the workers in Paris rebelled against the government, and set up a Commune. The French President crushed them, killing or exiling about 30,000.

Then in the middle of this century, when France had been defeated and occupied by the Germans, the Allied forces invaded France from Britain, and drove out the Germans. It took a few days to set up a new French government and administration so for a very short time, there were no police and no public order. In those few days, the French citizens lynched many of the Frenchmen who had accepted jobs under the German administration. Frenchmen never talk of those few days as far as I know there are no official figures for the murders, but the estimate is...yes, 30,000. Some Frenchmen who were there say that the figure was nothing like that: 'a few people were shot'. But others, who were also there, say it was a three-day civil war. Perhaps the truth will be known only when everyone concerned is dead.

From the British point of view, there is sometimes an extreme bitterness in the French attitude to enemies, and even a certain acidity in their attitude to friends. This is summed up by a maxim (!) of the famous French wit, the Duke of La Rochefoucauld, in 1665: *In the misfortune of our best friends we always find something which is not displeasing to us.*

Would we like a friend like this? It is true that this was said a long time ago, but every Frenchman knows this writer: he is in the schoolbooks. The French say that British people feel the same way, but do not talk about it. There is some truth perhaps in this, but I think the difference is that the Frenchman says 'we can *always* find something pleasing in the misfortune of our *best* friend'. This is too much cynicism. If we look at French civilization, however, we can see that their great geniuses were countering this hardness and bitterness. The greatest French poet is probably still Victor

Hugo, who was also a supreme novelist. He depicted the miseries of the poor, and awakened the sense of compassion in France, as Dickens did in Britain. But Dickens could not create the beauties that the poet Hugo could express, even in translation. When I was a boy, I found Hugo's *Les Misérables* on my father's bookshelves. At the age of eight, I read it again and again; I find that I know details better than most French people, who have I suppose, read it only once. It is a classic, most of us read our national classics only once at most.

"... In the misfortune of our best friends we always find something which is not displeasing to us."

Whether it made me more compassionate I do not know, but it gave me an insight behind the scenes of our vaunted civilization. It also showed me that happiness does not depend on being with many people. It can be solitary. The scenes of happiness in Dickens are often set in noisy parties and groups; Victor Hugo showed serenity in lonely contemplation of an ideal.

think I see in cases like Victor Hugo how the spirit of the nation rises up to correct some of its faults — in this case hardness and a satisfaction in wounding. If we look at the British, we find that they are not so vindictive when they win, moreover they do not take special pleasure in the misfortunes of others. Many nations find particular satisfaction when they see that others are less well placed than themselves. This is not a general British vice.

An old Shanghai Chinese once made an interesting remark to me about my country: 'You British are hypocritical and foxy. But you have one very good point. You are selfish like everyone else, but if you get what you want, then you are satisfied with that. Most other nations, when they get what they want, are still not satisfied: they try to prevent anyone else from getting it too! I felt pleased by the last remark: I had never thought about it in that way, but it has some truth. As to the 'hypocritical', most of us admit to that, and many of our greatest writers have satirised it. But when I tell

them that we have the reputation in the East as 'foxy', most British people are amazed. They deny it at once. I say: 'Don't think of us individually; think of us internationally. Don't you think it has some truth?' Alter thought, many say 'Yes, I suppose so

But still, all nations play foxy tricks; at least (as the French would say) if they can think of any. No, the besetting weakness of the British is complacency and inertia. 'Oh, it is good enough, it works quite well. Why change it?' It is difficult to get the British excited. It sounds like a formula for disaster, and sometimes it has nearly been so. But we have been saved by certain counter movements. The parallel with Victor Hugo and French vindictiveness and hardness would perhaps be George Bernard Shaw. If we are asked to name the six best English plays of the 20th century, they would all be by him. And he ruthlessly exposed our laziness and complacency, as well as hypocrisy, in these masterpieces. He was laughed at, but finally honoured.

This is a second saving characteristic: tolerance of eccentrics. Often eccentrics are mad, but sometimes they are geniuses. In Britain as a rule, they have not been persecuted, but left alone to develop their ideas. Among the many eccentrics in science, for instance, some turned out to be men of genius; they were mostly ignored for a time but not persecuted, whereas in France the wonderful Pasteur was bitterly opposed by the medical profession. He once remarked: 'I did not know a man could have so many enemies

What about Japan? We see sometimes traces of the vindictiveness which British people think is French. The extermination of the Heike, pursued through centuries, and the remaining prejudice against hisabetsu buraku even today are examples. Like the French, Japanese have developed a wonderful culture of small things. ('Small things' — the patronising phrase reveals the British yabottai, doesn't it?) The words of their popular songs are poems, which stand by themselves, and even get into poetry anthologies. Words of the American and English songs are boorish in comparison.

Even in aesthetics, the Japanese Too Much tendency shows itself. The artistic may degenerate into the artificial. We are amazed to see a traditional dancer wearing thin trousers covering the feet and trailing out

some distance behind. The dancer periodically kicks the trailing ends away! It must be difficult to dance in this fashion, but as a matter of fact it is not attractive because it is so artificial.

It seems to us that Japanese people have a mass of trivial rules and practices which they rely on to give a feeling of safety and identity. Some of them once had a meaning, but now there is often none. They are like the buttons on the sleeve of a man's jacket: when men rode horses, these were used to button back the cuffs to keep them clean. Today they are merely ornamental, and we do not feel lost without them.

"... tolerance of eccentrics. Often eccentrics are mad, but sometimes they are geniuses."

In Japan, when the load of trivialities becomes too great, they are not gradually reduced as in British history, but there is a violent convulsion which changes everything. This tends to go too far, and so loses meaning. The incredible tangle of the Manyo *gana* is replaced by the Kana syllabaries. They become artistic and beautiful, but more complicated. Some Japanese books and papers are written in columns from the right edge of the paper, and others in horizontal lines from the left. First year foreign students of Japanese, who do not know this, sometimes try to translate quite a long piece backwards, trying to find the backwards *okuri-gana* in the grammar, force the words to make sense. It may soon be time for another convulsion.

Periodically, Japanese great minds try to check the Too Much drive by critical assessment. Kano examined the systems of jujutsu, and in his critical assessment rejected many tricks which depended on surprise, or unreasonable strength, and so on. He was brilliantly successful in bringing out his new system of judo on rational principles. It seems to a foreigner that Japanese people feel resentful, and nervous, in the face of the 5% doubt or uncertainty in any assessment. Before a decision is taken, they try to foresee everything that may happen. But once the decision is taken, they went to carry it out 100%, and not 95%. They do not like a fox-doubt, as they feel it to be, and they are inclined to think of such a fox-doubt as traitor.

This is the fourth article on the subject and now I will stop. To do more would be Too Much.



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The Bulletin



Kodokan Emblem Revisited -(cont) _David Waterhouse

"cherry blossom kamikaze"; and in February 1945 one young pilot left the following haiku poem (as translated by Ivan Morris): *only we might fall in the Spring— So pure and radiant* There are two conclusive arguments against Draeger's identification. First the cherry blossom emblem is almost invariably shown with five convex lobes or petals where the Kodokan emblem has eight ogival lobes. (Some foreign judo clubs and organisations have used the five-lobed cherry as part of their emblems; Judo Canada, using five ogival lobes, contrives to get the best of both worlds.) Secondly, the Kodokan itself has given the following explanation:

About the principle of gentleness: the badge worn by members of the Kodokan represents a piece of red hot iron surrounded by pure white floss silk – hard in the centre, soft on the outside. The badge emphasizes the judo principle that the soft controls the hard, or gentleness can control force: that one can win by using the opponent's force against himself. One of the fascinations of Judo that has been responsible for its expansion and development abroad is probably the kind of sensational win which bears out the contention that a "small man can beat a big man". This principle was inherited from the Jujutsu era and must be passed on to future generations. The original Japanese text of this book makes essentially the same statement. A small pamphlet published by the Kodokan a few years ago adds further - The symbol was introduced in October 1940. The form is modelled after an ancient copper mirror. The red circle in the center symbolizes a sincere and passionate mind. The red circle is concealed by a white area which expresses soft and gentle white floss-silk.

Senta Yamada correctly identifies the outer shape of the Kodokan

emblem as a yata no kagami, or yata-kaganil. In Japanese legends chronicled in the early 8th century yata-kagami, "eight-hand mirror", refers to a huge mirror, suspended by the deities on the middle branches of a great tree. This, along with a lewd dance performed by another goddess, helped to persuade the Sun Goddeh, Amaterasu, out of hiding; and light was restored to the world. Despite what Yaniada says nobody knows exactly what yata means in the chronicles, or what the original yata-kagami looked like. The yata-kagami is also one of the Three Treasures associated with Amaterasu; and the word came to be most commonly used in this context. The sanshu no shinki, "Three Kinds of Divine Implement", are the Mirror, Sword and Curved Jewel: of which the originals are supposed to be kept secretly in the Kotai Jingu, one of the two great Shinto shrines at the Amaterasu herself is not only the most important of the Shinto deities, but also the lineal ancestor of the Japanese imperial house, closely associated with it throughout history.

All other bronzed mirrors described as yata-kagami are copies of the one at Ise. Almost all the earliest Japanese mirrors with eight ogival lobes, in the shape of the flower of a water chestnut (hishi), date from the 10th century or later; and production of such mirrors was clearly stimulated by the cult of the Sun Goddess. In turn, this eight-lobed mirror pattern was a direct imitation of one fashionable in the Tang-dynasty China during the eighth century (though most Tang examples have rounded rather than pointed lobes.) Ultimately, the shape was inspired by art of Iran. Among the myriad varieties of Japanese crest-badge (mon) is the sanshu no shinki, an eight-lobed ogival outline enclosing two crossed straight swords and two comma-shaped jewels. This mon is associated with many Shinto shrines; and Kano Jigoro's father came from a long and distinguished line of Shinto priests. No

doubt the Kodokan emblem was in the first instance an adaptation of the outer shape of this mon, with the substitution of a red circle on a white round. It was not evidence that it but rather a badge of membership in originally a "logo" for the Kodokan, the institution, to be worn on the left the judogi jacket. I find nohad been designed by Kano Jigoro himself. After Kano's death in May 1938, his nephew Rear-Admiral Nango Jiro was second head of the Kodokan, from December 1938 until the end of World War II. In 1943 he devised the kata Joshi Judo Goshin-ho, "Methods of Judo Self-Protection for Women". It would certainly not have been beyond him to devise a new emblem for the Kodokan; and in 1940 there was a special reason for doing so.

The meaning of the badge is partly explained by the Kodokan in the two passages quoted above; but the red circle on a white ground is also the hi no maru, the circle of the sun, as seen on the Japanese flag. 1944 was publicly commemorated as the 2600th anniversary of the founding of the Empire, the main events taking place November 10th. The Kodokan played its part, with anniversary tournaments in June, and October and on 10 November a match between Waseda and Keio Universities. Perhaps the Kodokan emblem made its first appearance on one of these occasions; and that its creation was in part a patriotic gesture. After World War II, it was perhaps deemed inappropriate to acknowledge this; and the cherry blossom explanation could have come into circulation. There was actually nothing to be ashamed of; and today both Japanese and the rest of us can afford to be more relaxed about the past, without covering it with whitewash. Judoka may continue to enjoy and use the Kodokan emblem, as an elegant summation of much that judo stands for: including not least the old motto ju yoku go o sei suru, "softness will effectively control hardness"

AGM 2002

The 2002 AGM of the Kano Society will be held on Saturday 13th April 2002 at the Budokwai 4 Gilston Road, London SW10. It will take place in the downstairs sitting room from 2-4pm.

New members, old members, those thinking of becoming members, interested persons are invited to attend.

If you have any items for the agenda, please let the hon sec know at least two weeks before the meeting or email the website.

We hope that there will be a good turn out and we will be looking for members with enthusiasm to help fill the position of officers and helpers—elections will take place for officers of the Society and there are always plenty of interesting tasks to be done!

How about bringing a friend and recruiting some new members

For those with the energy to do so—you can join in the Saturday afternoon practice in the upstairs Dojo after the meeting—4.30pm to 6pm.

