

SHOTOKAN RYU KASE HA INSTRUCTORS ACADEMY

SRKHIA Newsletter 6/04

Dear karateka,

Another Newsletter has reached your computer, with a small delay due to unforeseen personal problems. However it contains useful information concerning our organization. It also contains the last part of the *Dojo Guide* series in Budo themes column. With no further delay I am letting you to proceed with the contents of the Newsletter.

Kase sensei illness:

The latest information on Kase sensei health, as they were presented during the last Academy's Gashuku by his daughter Sachiko Kase, are that his situation is improving steadily, he is going to undergo a medical check up in Paris and if everything goes well, it is planned to have a by pass operation somewhere in autumn. In any case the sensei has to rest, therefore he will not teach any courses in 2004.

Amicale Kase

In a previous Newsletter there was a reference to Amicale Kase association, which has been created by Sachiko Kase, in order to support her father during the time of his recovery. Below, Sachiko Kase provides more detailed information concerning Amicale Kase and the way support may provided. Please be informed that SRKHIA provides financial support on a regular basis.

Dear Friends and Associates,

*As some of you may have heard, my father is presently recovering from an acute illness. To facilitate his fullest recovery and return to a normal, healthy life, we have created within our family the association "**Amicale KASE**". Its aim is to promote Shotokan karate in the spirit developed by my father. We invite all who share this aim to join in this new organization envisioned by my father.*

The association will serve as administrator for my father and disseminate useful information to its members worldwide.

How to Join Our Association

*If you wish to join « **Amicale KASE** », please provide us with your full name and/or company name, address, telephone, fax, and e-mail address.
Annual subscriptions have been fixed at 40, 60, 80 or 100 Euros, according to your resources. Of course, open donations of support are welcome in any desired amount. Subscriptions/donations can be made either on an individual or group basis (club, corporation, etc...).*

Kindly send your subscription and/or donation

1. by cheque made out to "Amicale KASE"

2. *by bank transfer to the following account :*
Association Amicale KASE
IBAN: FR76 3000 4019 8700 0100 6430 803
BIC : BNP AFRPP BBT BNP Parisbas Vanves Plateau (Bank's name)

Please notify us of the transfer at the following address:
Amicale KASE
8bis rue Jonquy
75014 PARIS
E-mail : sachiko.kase@freesurf.fr

We hope to welcome you into our membership.

*My father has devoted his life to Karate and his devoted students.
Today he needs your support.*

Sincerely,

*Sachiko KASE
Président*

Budo Themes: A dojo guide; the Dojo Kun

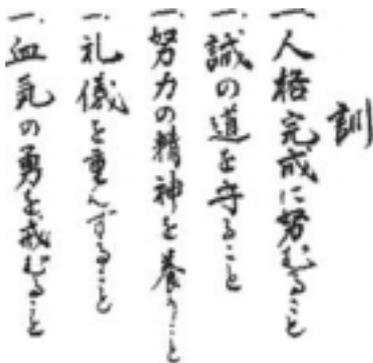
Every karateka around the world, especially the ones who at a certain time had a relationship with the JKA family, is familiar with the Dojo kun, the five precepts or instructions for practitioners of karate. It is found hanging in calligraphic forms in many dojo. Remember pictures from the JKA Honbu in Tokyo with the calligraphy of Dojo kun hanging in the Kamiza. In many dojo karateka are "chanting" the Dojo kun, during reiho, at the beginning and end of the training. But, are we sure that we know its meaning, origin and history?

The origin of the Dojo Kun is largely unknown; to my knowledge there is no clear evidence of the origin of the document at all. Many people consider Gichin Funakoshi as the "father" of Dojo Kun but probably this is not correct.

This is based to the fact that Funakoshi was famous for his calligraphy work; calligraphy was a common activity among scholars, as Funakoshi, and warriors as well. Every caligrafic work was signed by its creator. Funakoshi's calligraphic work, including his Nijukun, may found in many books but no calligraphic works of the Dojo Kun, signed by Funakoshi, has been found anywhere. Why would a man who created the Dojo Kun not write it down using his favorite activity of putting brush and ink to paper? I think because he did not write it. The Nijukun was his dojo kun but not the one we are talking about.

It is worthy to notethat there is no evidence of Dojo Kun existence before World War II. The Japanese writings of Funakoshi, in four different hard-bound publications about karate, contain absolutely no mention of the Dojo Kun. Even his autobiography does not mention it. Surely, if you had authored the central tenets of karate training as the founder of a style, would you not mention them either in one of your many books or your own life story as you told it?

That brings us to the conclusion that the five point document is a creation of the Japan Karate Association. All copies found are brushed by Nakayama, Okazaki, Enoeda and other JKA senior instructors. None created by instructors of the Shoto-Kai or Funakoshi himself is available. Probably Nakayama and some other colleagues of him created the Dojo kun in order to convince the Allied Occupational Authorities to allow them to continue practicing karate despite the ban on martial arts in Japan. (Editor's note: I am preparing an article on that case, the Budo ban in Japan 1945-1949) but never took credit for it, so people would just assume it came from somewhere prestigious or ancient. By never commenting on the creation of the Dojo Kun, it "just appeared" and histories seem to have been invented in the information vacuum.



Let's now have a look in the substance of the Dojo Kun, which is shown on the picture beside. Its **Japanese Pronunciation** stands for:

- Jinkaku kansei ni tsutomuru koto
- Makoto no michi wo mamoru koto
- Doryoku no Seishin wo yashinau koto
- Reigi wo omonzuru koto
- Kekki no yu wo imashimuru koto

A typical English Translation is:

- Seek perfection of character
- Be faithful
- Endeavor
- Respect Others
- Refrain from violent behaviour

Although this is the common translation, this is a bad one. So allow me to attempt to introduce you to the proper one, by using my poor Japanese language skills.

Firstly some remarks in reading the dokument. Read the words from from right to left and from top down. The most right character says "**Kun.**" Every line begins with a counter **hitotsu** that means "one." Every line ends with the word **koto**, which literally means "thing." This is generally interpreted to mean "*Here's a rule, here's another rule...*"

Following that the best English translation is

- **Strive for completion of character**
- **Protect the way of the truth**
- **Cultivate the spirit of effort**
- **Respect the principles of etiquette**
- **Guard against impetuous courage**

If you compare the two translations the difference is evident. Although someone may argue that there is no substantial difference, a closer view proves the opposite. Just a few examples: The common translation asks for loyalty, the literal one mentions

honesty. One asks for courtesy, the other for respect. Respect and Courtesy are two different things. Courtesy is mere politeness, respect is something different, in my opinion. Lastly, the common usage directs to avoid violence, the literal one asks you to be careful of poor judgement – quite a difference.

To many all these may seem irrelevant. However to those living budo on a daily basis, in every moment or action, I think a deeper understanding is absolutely necessary. And allow me to express another point. The Dojo kun, in general not referring to this specific one, works as the motto of the dojo, the “unifier” of members. This particular “Dojo kun” has been spread among Shotokan karateka by JKA; but any dojo may select its own. As an example the dojo kun of my laido dojo in Athens is “Vigor and Honor” – “Yuki to Meiyo”. Every dojo-cho may select a kun for his dojo, which will reflect particular dojo values. In addition it enhances the bond among the members of the dojo. If you find it worthy, try the idea.

Reports

The annual Academy’s Gashuku for 2004 took place on 5 & 6 June 2004, in Hasselt Belgium. Fifty members participated in the training. A more detailed report will be given at the next Newsletter.

Recommended Courses:

Dirk Fieret will organize a seminar on Kobudo and Kobujutsu on 27/6, in Terneuzen, the Netherlands. More information Dirk Fieret 0031 115 696383 or 695072, e-mail dfieret@zeelandnet.nl .

If you find it interesting to combine Karate training with travelling here is the case. Gomez Marco Alfonso will direct a seminar on 6,7,& 8 August 2994 in Fusagasuga/Cundinamarca, Colombia. If you are interested please contact the organizers, Héctor M. Limaz /Instructor Club de Karate **SHOTOKAN RYU KASE HA** Fusagasuga Cundinamarca, Teléfono (1) 680 45 52- Bogotá, E-mail: zensho@starmedia.com marcoalf@terra.es or Miguel Ciendua Salazar, NIDAN/FCK, Telefono (1) 867 28 32- Fusagasugá

If you want to combine holidays with budo training, Dave Wilkins, 5th Dan SRKH, will run a course with Derek Ridgeway, 6th Dan Shito Ryu, in Tenerife - Monday 1st November to Thursday 4th November with specially reduced rates at a 4 star hotel in Playa De Las Americas. For anyone interested, email Dave Wilkins, www.leicesterkarateclub.co.uk for more details.

If you want to be informed about various courses in different countries by any or particular instructor you must visit www.kamikazeweb.com and then follow the links for events. Our colleague Frank Schubert has a quite updated data base.

Last but not least; if you want to train with Dirk Heene sensei, at Honbu Dojo Limburg, throughout the year, you are welcome to stay in the dojo (sleeping bag is necessary). Price per day: 7 euro including: 2x training a day; use of showers, sanitary, kitchen. Buffet-restaurant is 5 minutes away.

Membership status:

As I informed you in the last Newsletter, the membership list for 2004 has been closed. In the same Newsletter the current membership list was included. Following a second examination the Membership list has been updated and is attached. Please note that people who have not paid for second year, therefore have been deleted from the Academy's ranks, are not included in that list. Also there are certain payments, particularly from Spain, with no mention of names; if you have paid and you do not see your name in proper status, please contact Treasurer Alan Armstrong, 19 Jubilee Drive, Bredon, Tewkesbury, GL20 7QJ, England, e-mail alan@armstrong-associates.fsnet.co.uk . Looking at statistics there are 142 active members, 36 in Dormant status while 22 have been stepped out from the Academy. Today SRKHIA has members in UK/England, UK/Scotland, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Andorra, France, Luxemburg, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Sweden, Finland, Poland, Italy, Greece, Slovenia, Israel, South Africa, Kambodia, Colombia, Australia :

Be reminded that all Newsletters may be found in www.shotokan-ryu-kase-ha.karate-muellheim.de , Pascal Petrella's dojo site on SRKHIA. The site includes many other useful Academy information as well.

The next Newsletter will be edited the first week of July 2004. Stay strong, train hard and enjoy life.

Oss

Spiros G. Drossoulakis