



The Bulletin

Volume 2 Issue 1

July 2001

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The Bulletin - Editor's comment

Welcome to the third edition of the 'Bulletin' - sorry that it has been produced a little later than hoped—but better late than never. This is our on line / off line newsletter about Judo and the Kano Society - the previous two issues are in the website so everyone can have a full set. Feel free to print off and distribute to colleagues and friends who you think may be interested. As I said before we do need articles and contributions. This may be in the form of news, interesting bits and pieces, photographs or reminiscences and historical material. Send in by email or post to Publications Department— 7 High Street Penge, London SE20 7HJ England The Kagami-biraki which was advertised in the last issue went well and was an enjoyable occasion when some of the audience admitted that this was the first time they had seen Kata. Percy Sekine kindly allowed us to use the Judokan and the demonstrations were followed by a variety of Japanese food and drink—Sake for those who wanted it .. But the Mochi turned out not to be recommended—if you wanted to live to eat another meal! Hopefully we will be able to hold another in new year 2002—please let us know if you want to participate in any way.

Please note details of Trevor Leggett's memorial event (see page 4) which will be held in early September. It is now almost a year since our patron died and this celebration of his life and works will be an important milestone in marking the first anniversary of his passing. Regards— Diana Birch



The Kano Society

The Kodokan Emblem -

The Kano Society have adopted the cherry flower symbol as their logo. There are interesting historical and traditional facts behind the symbolism.

The following is taken from Judo Training Methods by Takahiko Ishikawa and Donn F. Draeger

The Kodokan Emblem

The Kodokan emblem is seen very often by people practicing Judo and many have asked what it represents. Since the Kodokan is the original school of Judo founded by Jigoro Kano and still the international technical authority for Judo, its symbol is found in many dojos, books, web pages, and even on judogi. The symbol can be displayed with or without the Japanese characters for "ju" (gentleness, softness, yielding, or flexibility) and "do" (way, road, path, or teaching) as shown here.

The cherry blossom was considered an especially beautiful and important symbol for Japanese samurai because at the height of its beauty it would inevitably fall to the ground to die. Samurai also had to be willing to sacrifice themselves in their prime, and the cherry blossom was evidence that this is the natural way of things and could even be

beautiful and pure. Life is as delicate and light as the falling petals, and there is a natural time for all beautiful things to end. The samurai strove to understand the nature of life and death by meditating on the blossom of the cherry tree. This peace was tempered by the inner strength, power, and fighting spirit represented by the circle of red. Through the study of attack and defense in Judo we learn to harmonize our spirit and body, learning to both fight hard and let go softly.

The standard emblem of the Kodokan is an 8 petaled 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. It symbolizes a degree of maturity within the individual which is summarized by the expression, "Strong within, but gentle without." The fire red color of the center of the emblem indicates the "fire" or "ardor" of the individual.

The spirit of the Kodokan combines the strength of iron forged to red heat inside the silk, supple, and white flower. This is symbolic of the union of body strength and resistant suppleness and flexibility of the pure spirit developed by the Judo



The fire within the pure white flower

Donn F. Draeger

exponent of black belt grade. It is a sign of personal attainment.

Donn Draeger: The following is an edited section of an excerpt from *Martial Musings* by Robert W. Smith which was submitted by Arthur Tansley.

Donn lived in a rambling house in the Ichigaya section of Tokyo. Big and well made, it nevertheless shivered it's timbers when Wang Shujin, the neijia master, would visit and punch anything anchored. Residents included Jon Bluming, young Jim Bregman (the 1964 Tokyo Olympics 3rd place winner), Doug Rogers (Canadian heavy-weight champion and 2nd place winner in the same Olympics), Bill Fuller, and a dyspeptic Japanese housekeeper with an expression

(Continued on page 2)

*Life is as delicate
and light as the
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stronger than Wang's punch. It was said that Donn had more than a hundred black belts in the various martial arts - which is perhaps excessive but as Douglas Chadwick said

'I wouldn't claim that all elephant stories are true.. but with elephants, you don't need to make up all that much'

Donn and the Ichigaya gang were on call for film producers in Tokyo who needed foreign extras they played every type of foreign soldier in battle scenes and Donn's most lucrative film work was for the James Bond series. Donn wrote over twenty books. He pecked away at his small

typewriter hours a day, instructing, clarifying, leading. His books were authentic, blending tradition and innovation. Though his prose was centered and vital, his inherent humor was absent. Outside his books, which had all the wit and humor of Marine Corps administrative memoranda, Donn was always full of fun.

Donn's fighting priorities changed over time. In judo when his knees gave out, he pursued groundwork and was reputed to be in the top echelon in Japan in that area. He also taught a few top Japanese swordsmen in a mountain retreat for several weeks each year. Isao Ino-

kuma, who won the 1964 heavy-weight judo title, told Japanese television that Donn's coaching was the key to his success - an unprecedented acknowledgment by a Japanese judoka. Early on, judo and kendo were the objects of his effort. After 1965, however, weaponry supplanted the judo. His mentor at the Tenshin Shoden Katori Shinto-ryu, Otake Risuke, said that when Donn entered his school fifteen years before, he was already 5th-dan judo, 7th-dan kendo, 7th-dan iaido, and a 7th-dan in jodo with kyoshi, or instructors rank. Once he started doing Tenshin Shoden Katori Shinto-ryu, he stopped judo and kendo, his old sportive favorites.

Around 1966, Donn relocated to Narita, an hour outside Tokyo, where he remained for the rest of his life. He died of cancer in 1985.

There can be no mystery in how he benefited America and the world by his contributions. He opened Asian combatives to the full view of the West. He was an authentic warrior able to blend the tough with the tender. He could fight the match, referee it, and then explain the mechanics of it later in his books. He was an unusual American.

Donn never made a dollar with his incomparable skill. All of it went into the more than twenty books we have inherited. Hear his name.

Too Little Too Much—Trevor Leggett - part two 1997

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

Last month I described how at the age of sixteen I heard Dr. Jigoro Kano lecturing in London on the Principle of maximum Efficiency: *Saidai Noritsu Genri*—yes, I learnt the Japanese words by heart, like a sort of magic charm. But like many charms, the meaning did not seem to be very profound.

He told us that the principle means: do not use too much force, and do not use too little. I thought this was obvious, and I wondered why such an awe-inspiring and highly educated teacher should bother to keep on saying it. It was years before I understood that he was referring not only to individual judo waza or to individual actions in life, but also to one's whole attitude to the world. I came to realize that most of us are either Too Much men, who always tend to force things, or Too Little men, who are always cautious and 'tap on the stone bridge before crossing'. Whichever class we personally belong to, we have to try to correct the fault. The Too Much men have to learn to appreciate that gentleness, *ju*, can be very effective without waste of effort; the Too Little men have to realize that precautions are endless, and that we cannot live if we always prepare to prepare to prepare.

When I had reached this understanding, it occurred to me that it is not only individuals who have fixed attitudes. Nations and their cultures can be seen in this way—there are Too

Much nations, and Too Little nations. Sometimes the clear-sighted ones in the nation are aware of the weakness, and try to correct it by their writings and their political and cultural activities. Sometimes they have some success, but in other cases no one will listen to them till there is some sort of national or cultural disaster.

When I had been some time in Japan, I began to notice what seemed to me Too Much-ness. As so often, one sees an unusual idea in some small thing. I was told that a traditional Kyoto hostess would say good-bye to one guest, and then change into new white tabi socks before receiving the new guest. I knew and admired the Japanese passion for cleanness, but I felt this was purity gone mad.

I know that it is irritating to be told about history as a guide to character. We feel: 'Oh, we are not like that today'. But about thirty years ago I was told something which was to me equally incredible. We were talking about a senior NHK broadcaster who had had a fine career. Someone said to me, 'He is not regarded as quite pure NHK, because at the very beginning, before he joined us, he worked with a commercial company for eight months'. He gave a little laugh as he said this, but he did say it. British people could never make such a comment; we could not even think it. Perhaps Italians could: they have a saying

Traduttore è traditore which means, *Translators, traitors*. A translator must be familiar with many foreign ideas, and so he is not purely Italian in his outlook. And so, he might become a traitor to Italy. British people would think that, though there may sometimes be a tiny bit of truth in the saying, that tiny truth must not be made Too Much.

I admit that the Too Much policy does succeed in its first objective: the Tokugawa ban on foreign-learning called Dutch learning through an accident of history—is an example of that success. At the end of the 17th century, there was some reason to fear foreign inventions. Japan did stop their import and then the manufacture of firearms. I checked up, and found that in a typical year, for instance 1705, only 250 pistols were manufactured in Japan and were used just in ceremonies. The Tokugawas did secure peace for over two centuries. This was something unheard of in Europe where it took a long time to disarm the civilian populations. The Japanese did it quickly. But then they carried the policy on Too Much. They banned nearly all foreign-learning. They apparently had the idea that if Japan did not concern itself with the outside world, the outside world would not concern itself with Japan. I checked and found that clear-sighted men such as the scholar Hayashi Shihei tried to warn the government, but they were not listened to, and were even

persecuted as 'war-mongers'. I believe this is a very important point. There are always some who are aware of a national weakness (for instance Too Much or Too Little) and who try to warn. The herd instinct is against them, but when they are respectfully listened to the country has a chance to avoid disaster. I will take up this point in the next article.

For an illustration of Too Much, look at new buildings. In Japan in the last forty years, a major new building had to be one or two floors higher than previous ones. It had big signs on every tenth floor, to prove its height. A new hotel had to have the extra floors, though it required more capital, and postponed profitability. When I heard about this, I remembered the Gothic cathedrals of France. Each new one was a few feet higher than the last, till they reached a limit with Beauvais, part of which fell down under the weight of the stone.

To us English, the French have always seemed a Too Much nation. Their French Revolution perhaps had some justification. But having executed the King and about 2,000 aristocrats, they continued, and guillotined about 35,000 others. Finally they began to execute each other. Robespierre, their most prominent leader, was himself guillotined; even Thomas Paine, the great defender of the American and French Revolutions through his

Too Little (cont.)

(Continued from page 2)
books *The Rights of Man* and *The Age of Reason*, was imprisoned but managed to escape with his wife.

From England, the politician and orator Edmund Burke gave the English view. Where Tom Paine demanded quick radical changes, Burke said that five months of rage and frenzy can destroy what has taken fifty years of wisdom, foresight, and prudence to build up. But he also saw the weakness of this idea of life as slow evolution—gardening in fact. ‘Our people are sluggish and do not like innovation’, he admitted. In other words, we are liable to do Too Little.

In 1871, the workers of Paris tried to rebel; the French president crushed them ruthlessly, killing altogether an estimated 30,000. It was the same French authorities that in 1889 built the then useless but magnificent Eiffel Tower (984ft. ; in 1959 raised to 1052 ft.). When

London built its own Post Office Tower (what an unromantic name!) it would have been easy to make it higher than the Eiffel Tower; but the British engineers never considered that. Nor is the height of a new hotel any important factor in designing it. The questions in British minds are, how good is it as a hotel, and how soon will it begin to make a profit? This common-sense attitude has some strengths, but often it simply lacks vision. And in that sense, I can see that Britain is often a Too Little nation. We are in general cautious; it is not fear, but a balancing of the supposed risks.

The attitude saves us from some terrible mistakes. But it has disadvantages. I can sum these up in this incident: a young student in physics suggests a revolutionary solution to a famous problem. His teacher dismisses it, but later the student gets a Nobel prize for it. The teacher is later asked why he rejected it. He says: ‘I knew that ninety-nine sug-

gested solutions to that famous problem would be wrong, and I simply assumed that his solution was one of the ninety-nine! ‘Too Little enthusiasm, Too Little respect for the student, Too Little daring.

One the other hand, Britain makes fewer mistakes than some others. In the 1960’s, Japanese students occupied universities and fought hopeless battles to defend them. French students did the same, and also deliberately urinated in the lecture halls and rooms in ‘protest’ as they called it. There was little of either of these things from British students. They did protest, but not in these irrational ways. Perhaps my occasional criticism of France comes from my being an Englishman; up to a mere two hundred years ago, we were traditional enemies. So we still tend to criticise them. But we also have to admit that they civilized Europe—and us.

Too Much, Too Little, individuals

and nations—the point is, how can we recognize our tendency towards one or the other, and most importantly, how can we change to Dr. Kano’s principle of Right Action? I will try to look at this next time.



The Essence of Judo
-Old Japanese print-

Kangeiko and Shochugeiko

We did not eventually hold a Kangeiko in this past winter but nevertheless it is interesting to note the meaning and traditions behind these events. The following short notes were contributed by Syd Hoare taken from *Illustrated Kodokan Judo 1955*. Just for completeness I also include some notes on Kagami-biraki which amplify those included in the last Bulletin.

Kangeiko

This word means ‘cold-practice’. It is traditionally part of the training for martial artists and classical Japanese musicians. The idea is that by training in the most adverse of conditions such as the coldest time of the day and year or the hottest time (shochugeiko) one learns to do ones art regardless of the conditions. An artist who could only perform in perfect conditions would not be highly regarded. In the martial arts this is fairly practical since an attack can come at any time in theory. It is usual to hold the Kangeiko either early in the morning or during the night with no heating whatsoever in the place of training. A cold shower afterwards

would be de rigeur.

The Kodokan has an annual 30 day Kangeiko during the months of January and February. Whereas it may not be so difficult to get out of bed once on a freezing morning and do judo the test comes in turning up every day. The Kangeiko is now widely used as a training method among most traditional Japanese arts and sports.

Kagamibiraki

The Kagamibiraki or Kagamibirakishiki was one of the main functions in the New Year festival of old Japan. In feudal times every military family would on New Years Day,

“... An artist
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regarded”



Zen Garden—Ryoanji Temple—Kyoto

offer Kagami-mochi (two tiers of round mirror-shaped rice cakes usually offered to the deity) to each set of armour – belonging to the sons as well as the head of the household – and then to pray for success in future wars. On the 20th day of January, they cut these cakes into pieces and prepare for Shiruko (red bean soup with rice cakes) and Zoni (boiled rice cakes with vegetables), etc., then the family and guests ate them together. With the decline of the military class this

custom fell into disuse, but in some circles it is still kept alive although modifications have been made to suit the present times. In the Kagamibiraki of the Kodokan the time honoured Shiruko is served to all the members and guests present. Prior to the eating, there is an exchange of greetings between the President and representative members. There is also a demonstration of Kata and Randori accompanied by a customary promotion ceremony on the same programme.



The Kano Society

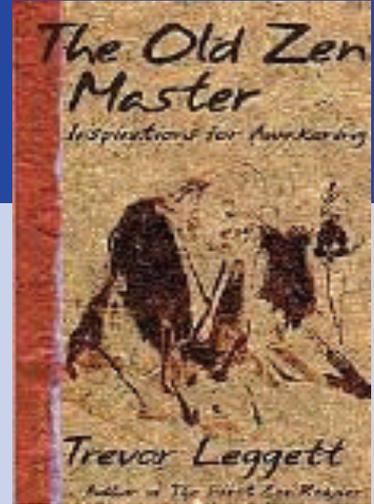
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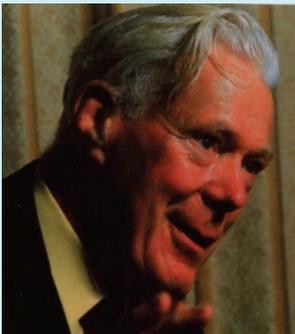
Trevor Leggett Commemoration Event

Trevor Leggett

A Celebration of his Life and Works

Saturday 8th September 2001

at 12 noon at St James' Church - Piccadilly



Trevor Leggett Judo expert, Martial artist, musician, writer, scholar, mentor and friend ... a man who was many things to many people . Join us as we remember an exceptional man and celebrate his achievements and the time he spent with us

The commemoration will last for an hour and will consist of a number of brief talks and appreciations, 2 readings and some music. It will be followed by some simple refreshments nearby. Those coming should let the Kano Society know as we will need to know numbers. Please email Tony Dunn at tony_dunne47@hotmail.com.

Consult website for further details or email anyone@kanosociety.org

