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## USA SEIWA KAI NEWSLETTER

**Dedicated to Traditional Goju Ryu Karatedo**  
**ISSUE 3: NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2013**

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# Interview with Leo Lipinski

By Glenn Stephenson (Seiwa Kai Australia)



**Leo Lipinski Shihan 8th Dan**

*Leo Lipinski is the highest graded non-Japanese in the JKF Gojukai and was a staunch supporter of Shuji Tasaki Shihan. I first met him back in 1989; he is one of the best exponents of kumite I have seen and fought. He has single handedly built up JKF Gojukai in the UK, Europe and South Africa.*

**GS: How long have you been practicing martial arts? How did you get started, why, who did you trained with?**

**Leo Lipinski Shihan** – I started Martial Arts–judo and some karate in 1962. In those days the training was very poor and the instructors new little more than the students. Shotokan was the first style I was exposed to? It was then the only style available.

**GS: How many styles have you trained in?**

**Leo Lipinski Shihan** – I have trained in Shitoryu (Shukokai), Shotokan and Goju and of course various methods of Goju. I have also trained in boxing, different methods of Kung-fu and Thai boxing.

**GS: Have there been many changes in Karate since you started training?**

**Leo Lipinski Shihan** - Very many. Instructors today are more knowledgeable about the behavior of our bodies but attitudes to training are very different. The sporting aspects too have undergone considerable changes– some are due to changes in the rules and some changes in karate have led to rule changes too. One of the key factors that I think have affected the way people train is the higher level of affluence in many countries since the 50s and 60s. This is very noticeable in Western Europe and Japan. I also see it taking place in many Central and Eastern European countries where I teach. Also today Karate has to compete in the marketplace with a multitude of other sports and leisure options. Many years ago our choices were more limited so people stuck more easily to one activity.

**GS: In your opinion what aspects of training should students be concentrating on to improve their techniques, and why?**

**Leo Lipinski Shihan** – this is difficult to answer in simple terms. Firstly it depends on their motivation for practicing karate. Some want exercise, some want to study the “art” side of the Martial Arts. I am yet to see this myself. Some are only interested in Kata. Other want self-defense– finally or maybe not finally there are those who enjoy all aspects of fighting. Returning to your question; to achieve excellence at any activity requires a lot of repetitive basic practice. This can be related to all the aspects I mentioned at the start of this answer. It could be fundamentals related to self-defense—including Bunkai, it could be drills and strategy practise for kumite, it could be a mixture of typical (I won’t say traditional) Kihon practice for Kata and ultimately Kihon kumite. It depends on the way of teaching of a specific instructor. My prime interest in karate is kumite and its application as a self-defense methodology. I firmly believe that to learn to fight you must fight. So most of my basics are geared to fighting not the typical up and down movements you will see in most dojos. I use these for warm-up only and usually I dispense with this type of monotonous practice after about 15 minutes. Many teachers today concentrate on Bunkai and prearranged training—I do not spend any time on this yet my students know the application of all movements in their kata. I use kata techniques directly in fighting – obviously used with safety as many can be dangerous. Most of my classes then are geared towards fighting, yes and Kata, but Kata only being learned for its capacity to be a record of the various techniques to be used in combat.

**GS: Do you have any interesting stories of your early days in Karate? (In South Africa, Japan, and UK)**

**Leo Lipinski Shihan** - I will have to think about this one. Perhaps you need to tell me what kind of stories I can tell you.

**GS: You’ve trained and spent a lot of time in Japan with the Gojukai, are there differences between the Japanese style of training / etiquette / grading etc and what we do over here?**

**Leo Lipinski Shihan** - There are many differences in attitude to work, to discipline and to values. I think we are potentially as good as the Japanese but we do not as a rule have their dedication. Another difference is our preoccupation with sport as opposed to Budo. Sport has its place and so does Budo but karate essentially has Bujitsu at its core. We in the West do not have the depth and the quality at the top and we confuse sports results with competence overall. Japanese etiquette is far more noticeable. Westerners are also far more “grade-hungry” than the Japanese and not as likely to realize that grades should be earned and should not be awarded (almost of an honorary nature).

**GS: Shihan you were graded to 5th Dan by Gogan Yamaguchi and you were at the top of the IGKA. What was your main reason for the change from the Yamaguchi group to train under Tasaki Shihan (Gojuryu Karate do Seiwakai)?**

**Leo Lipinski Shihan** – Many of my reasons were of a personal nature. The main reason initially was I did not like all the people who in later years had joined the Yamaguchi organization. Also

the emphasis in the training had changed and the new ways were not to my liking. These were the primary reasons.

**GS: In your opinion, who are the great fighters of modern times?**

**Leo Lipinski Shihan** - What do you mean by great fighters? From which aspect of karate – WKF sport or the contact versions? Certainly in sport names like Otto from Britain and Pinna from France spring to mind. I think Otto has won the world title more than any other. Insofar as the traditional format is concerned – this one is far more difficult to answer. I have very little knowledge of the Kyokushin top fighters and they are a very tough group. There are many groups practicing contact within a variety of rule structures.



**GS: What is your analysis on Sports Karate?**

**Leo Lipinski Shihan** - I do not have an “analysis” as you put it. I have an opinion. Sports or karate with rules is by its nature for young people? How do we define young? I will leave that to you. Personally I do not train myself with a view to “rules” – rather I train with limited contact using many so-called prohibited techniques – with a limit to the intensity and obviously avoiding some target areas such as joints and eyes. To me contact is great but in training it should not be so hard as to prevent you training daily – of course accidents can happen in all physical activities.

**GS: How do you see the future of Goju Ryu Karate do Seiwakai Internationally?**

**Leo Lipinski Shihan** – We will grow and grow and grow – and with perseverance our standards and level will also go from strength to strength.

**GS: Is there anything else you’d like to share with us?**

**Leo Lipinski Shihan** - yes – I would like to see you and your readers get as much pleasure out of Karate and all that is associated with it as I continue to receive.

## Sad News

Dear Seiwakai members:

We have received some very sad news about one of our senior instructors, Paul Coleman Sensei of Oxford in the UK. Paul Sensei has been diagnosed with Stage IV cancer and it is likely his condition is terminal.

Paul Sensei is doing his best to fight this illness but needs all the help he can get. He has a new wife and young child and they are all in a dire financial situation.



We ask for your monetary contribution in whatever amount you can manage, to contribute to a fund to help Paul Sensei and his family meet their ongoing financial commitments. Anything you can give will be greatly appreciated. Let's show our solidarity as a Seiwakai family for one of our leaders who is in great need.

Contributions can be sent to KICK by check, visa or mastercard and will be transferred to Paul Sensei at the earliest possible time.

Sincerely and Respectfully,

**Vassie Naidoo**

7th Dan

***President and Chief Instructor***

Goju-Ryu Karate-Do Seiwa-Kai USA

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## Spotlight on East West Goju Ryu Dojo of Staten Island N.Y.

### Kevin Moskie Chief Instructor



Sensei Kevin Moskie was born in 1966 and has been a devoted practitioner of GoJu Ryu for the past 27 Years. He began his training in 1985 at the urging of his older brother, and received his black belt from Shihan Chris Debaise on January 1, 1989. Sensei met and trained with many Grand masters including George “Sensei Smitty” Smith and even trained with Grand Master Peter Urban at a seminar in upstate New York. He trained Aiki Jujitsu for a short time with Abel Costanos and Chris Sookchand of the Kaze Arashi Ryu. He traveled to Okinawa Japan in August of 2007 and trained with the masters of the Okinawan Goju Ryu Karatedo Kyokai. He has been ranked as high as 5th Degree black belt.

In 2012 he joined the USA Goju Ryu Karatedo Seiwa Kai and was accepted as a student by world renowned instructor Shihan Vassie Naidoo. Sensei Kevin was granted permission to open his dojo, East West Goju Inc, as the New York Branch of the Usa Goju Ryu Karatedo Seiwa Kai. This past July Sensei Moskie traveled to Japan and trained at the Seiwa Kai Headquarters in Omagari in order to further his knowledge of Goju Ryu Karatedo.

## **The Value of Self-Practice:**

### **The Snail May Actually Reach the Summit**



**By James Pounds**

I've always enjoyed time spent training by myself. Over the years I've probably spent as much time in self-practice as I have instructing or training in a group. Obviously, there are things that can only be achieved with training

partners. Timing. Distance. Practical applications. It's hard to do kumite by myself. And there's nothing like the synergistic spirit generated by a group of committed practitioners. But many martial artists overlook the benefits and necessity of self-practice.

One of the best things about training by myself is that it's off-schedule. It can be spontaneous. Many times, I'll work in an hour's training during my workday, simply as a recharge activity. Of course, I have a small home dojo, which makes it quick and convenient to change into gi pants and bow in. But many times I've trained in the small space between the bed and desk in my hotel room, or in a racquetball court at the University where I work. It really doesn't take a dojo or even a special place. But it does take commitment.

Personally, I like to break up my personal practice between kata practice, physical conditioning, floor drills, bag-work, and makiwara training. These are activities that can be done without a partner, and they are all activities that deepen the understanding of ourselves and our art, and make our karate stronger over time.

So what's the structure of my typical self-practice session? Here's a preview of mine: First, no need to dress formally. Sometimes I wear a full gi and obi, but mostly I'm in gi pants or shorts. Depending upon the time of year, I may not wear a shirt. It's informal. The object is immersion and sweat. Lots of sweat is better.

I start a session by bowing in silently and then begin with yoga stretches and breathing exercises to warm and open the body. From there I'll move into strengthening exercises for quads, abs and shoulders. I seldom use weights, preferring to use my own body: sit-ups, pushups, squats, etc.

Next comes work on the heavy bag. I'll start with three to five two-minute rounds of hands-only techniques, keeping it fast and continuous, building power round-by-round, and allowing myself a minute between rounds. After the hands-only rounds, I'll work a couple of rounds using hands and feet while moving around the bag.

Then it's on to kata work. I'm not very scientific about how I choose which kata I'm going to work, preferring to let the katas decide which one wants to work with me. It's beneficial to vary the kata practice: Tai Chi speed. Or with wrist weights. Or wrist and ankle weights. Then hard and fast. Working only on segments of a kata that have been a challenge or that need improvement really helps. I'll work on a single kata for perhaps fifteen or twenty minutes; usually only working on one or two in a self-practice session. But sometimes I feel ambitious and start at my most basic kata and run through the entire Goju-Ryu syllabus. Between these kata sets I'll do a number of pushups and abdominal exercises then return to the heavy bag for fifteen to fifty full power reps of various kicking and striking techniques, using left and right sides equally. This is the opportunity to build power because there's no need to pull anything or hold back.

Okay, by now I'm really sweating, so it's time to move on to floor drills – primarily offensive combinations up and down the floor. I'm feeling good if I can hang for three continuous minutes of a floor drill. Doesn't sound like much, but I say give it a try and see for yourself. Three minutes is a long time to be moving up and down the floor throwing techniques with both hands and feet. At least it seems like it to this old man!

In every practice session I will work Sanchin and Tensho katas, Goju-Ryu's internal kihon katas. They are a part of every Goju-Ryu grading and require a lifetime of work for proficiency, so they merit special attention and continual work. And if my construction trailer isn't in the way, I'll finish with makiwara training.

To close out self-practice, I've found it beneficial to spend even five minutes on some cool-down stretches, concentrating primarily on my hamstrings and lower back. Maybe it's my personal physiology, but those are the two areas that tighten up the most from a hard training. Just five minutes of lengthening stretches works wonders on keeping the stiffness and soreness to a minimum.

All of this routine can be completed in an hour. It can be made shorter or longer simply by modifying the number of reps or rounds. Many times I'll only do forty-five minutes and seldom will I do more than an hour and fifteen minutes. If you work in only one session per week, you've probably increased your training time by fifteen to thirty percent. You'll see benefits quickly.

This time alone on the mat is both physically and mentally beneficial. In the quiet solitude of our own practice, we overcome many obstacles.



“If this snail sets out for  
The top of Fuji,  
Surely he will get there.”

-Yamaoka Tesshu -

# 空手道 Reishiki-Reigi Saho-Etiquette

By Johnpaul Williams

*Editor's Note: At the November Seiwa Kai Seminar and JKF Grading in Guadalajara, Mexico, Fujiwara Shihan asked that the following traditional bowing ceremony be used at each and every practice. It is the opinion of the editor that Fujiwara Shihan made this request to emphasize the need to remember respect in all of our endeavors. Showing respect in large and small matters alike polishes our character as human beings.*

So what does Reishiki Mean? Reishiki is the order of bowing (bowing ceremonies) that open and close class. This is where Deshi (students) line up according to their particular grade and pay their respect, or offer thanks, for what they are about to learn or have learned.

Over the years in training we've come across many Dojo and have regularly noticed people mumbling out words and phrases and stumbling through karatedo etiquette and ceremonies. They didn't know either what they were doing or saying (in Japanese), and didn't understand the meaning behind it. (Ariipato homabatamabamen... huh - what?) No one had explained to them what etiquette has to do with their safety or the standards in their relative school. More importantly, they do not know when etiquette is in order. In truth, many martial artists are unaware of Reishiki, Reigi-saho and the proper etiquette of their Dojo or any Ryu Ha.

## Reishiki-Reigi Saho-Etiquette



In order to explain Reishiki to a student, one must recognize that many of the Eastern systems of philosophy included certain practices and rituals that are intended to condition the body and the mind of the practitioner for the inevitable hard times to come. In terms of budo, these rituals prepare a warrior for battle.

Etiquette in the Dojo is not intended to place students beneath or above each-other and the instructors on an even higher plane. The purpose of etiquette is to organize the dojo into a functional society. This entails the demonstration of discipline, dedication, personal development, common-sense, and most important of all the acquisition of manners.



Reishiki comes from two Japanese words. The first is “REI” which is defined as: bow, courtesy, respect, honor and appreciation. The second part of the term is “SHIKI” which is defined as: ceremony, rite or function. Combined the term “Reishiki” can translate as: Ceremonial manners or etiquette. Some might consider this type of ceremony as being old-fashioned and antiquated. However, the end goal of Rei is rooted into all forms of Budo; any Martial Art without Reishiki is just fighting, and Karatedo with respect is simply a fight.

A highly structured class in any system of Budo, which includes Gojuryu Karatedo, begins on time with a senior student calling the beginning of class by ordering everyone to line up. Note: There is a formality to lining up. Kamiza 上座 [the Senior or most acknowledged person] and Shimoza 下座 [the most junior person] in attendance must line up or sit in their appropriate locations.

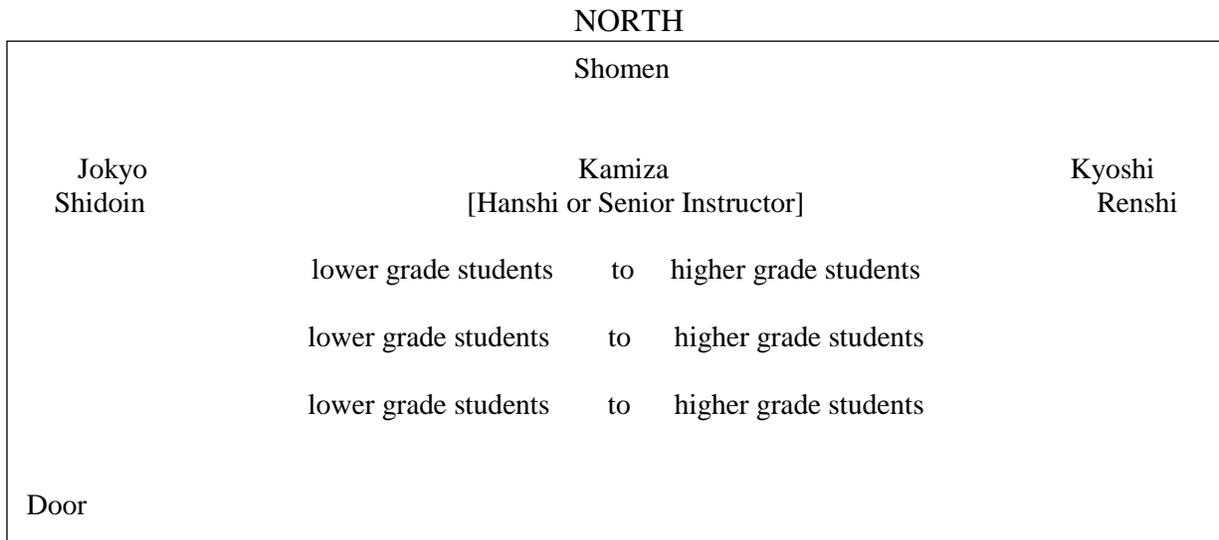
This means the most junior person is seated closest to the door and the most senior person is seated farthest away from the door [or primary entrance / exit] if possible. If the door is to the center of the room or if there is a Shinza [a shrine like focal point of Shomen 正面 and Kamiza 上座 ] then the upper right side of Shinza / Shomen 正面 is Kamiza 上座 / Joseki 上席 and the lower left side of Shinza / Shomen 正面 is Shimoza 下座 where the Junior attendees still closest to the entrance / exit. To clarify:

- Those most senior whom are present reside nearest to Kamiza 上座 and farthest away from the entrance if possible. This person is the absolute highest graded [Hanshi or Saiko Shihan] at the upper right of the dojo.
- Those most junior whom are present reside at Shimoza 下座 - nearest to the entrance and the absolute lowest graded [Mukyu] at the lower left of the dojo.

To assist in the understanding of the proper arrangement for seating or lining up; let's first understand and note the common Kanji:

- Do 道 – way or path;  
Jo 場 – place;
- Joseki 上席 - Senior [The upper or highest seat];
- Kamiza 上座 - Seat of Honor [The upper position of the room];
- Maseki 末席 - Lowest Seat [The lower seat];
- Shimoza 下座 - Squatting [Shimoza may also be called Shimoseki];
- Shomen 正面 - Front;
- Keikojo / Embujo 稽古場 / 演武場 - Rehearsal / demonstration field;
- Genkan 玄関 - Entrance
- Shinden - Raised area / stage
- Kamidana 神棚 - House Alter
- Tokonoma 床の間 - Alcove

Another way to describe this is to simply draw from the instructions below. Let's start with a rectangle to make a diagram of a formal dojo layout:



Dojo Reishiki (ceremony) is important to the creation of a formal and traditional atmosphere in the Dojo. In traditional Karatedo, one of the first concepts that we are taught is that of Reishiki (or at least it should be). I don't think any students lasts long who greets their instructor with the term "Yo Sensei" or "Yo, my main man-Sensei." As we begin our training, the concepts of Reishiki are taught to us as much of the art is, through observing those who have come before us.

Below are the formal commands for the beginning and ending of each class.

- 'Seiretsu' [line up]
- 'Kiotsuke' [attention]
- 'Seiza' [kneeling position] or Chakuza [sit down]
- 'Mokuso' [begin meditation]
- 'Mokuso Yame' [end meditation] or 'Naorei' [as you were]
- 'Dojo Kun' [end of class only / bowing out only].

- 'Shomen ni taishite Rei' [Zarei-sitting bow to front] or 'Shinzen ni taishite Rei' [if at shrine or temple]
- 'Shihan ni taishite Rei' - [Zarei-sitting bow towards Shihan if present]
- Beginning of class; Say 'Onegai Shimasu'
- End of class; Say 'Arigato Gozai Mashita'.
- 'Sensei ni taishite Rei' - [Zarei-sitting bow towards Sensei if present]
- Beginning of class; Say 'Onegai Shimasu'
- End of class; Say 'Arigato Gozai Mashita'.
- 'Sempai ni taishite Rei' - [Zarei-sitting bow towards Sempai if present]
- Beginning of class; Say 'Onegai Shimasu'
- End of class; Say 'Arigato Gozai Mashita'.
- 'Otagai ni Rei' [Zarei-sitting bow to each other-beginning of class]
- Beginning of class; Say 'Onegai Shimasu'
- End of class; Say 'Arigato Gozai Mashita'.
- 'Otagai ni waka Rei' [Zarei-sitting bow to each other-end of class]
- Beginning of class; Say 'Onegai Shimasu'
- End of class; Say 'Arigato Gozai Mashita'.
- 'Sotachi' [all raise] or 'Kiritsu' [stand up]
- 'Ritsu Rei' [standing bow].

This is a lot of bowing. However, not every bow applies to every class. Bowing is a way of showing respect thus building both character and discipline. We should also note that this ceremony is not religious in nature. It is an important part of the "Reishiki" which is focused etiquette and is essential to Budo. Any martial art without mutual respect is just a fight. Some of the more common times to use Reishiki are:

- Beginning and the end of classes
- Seminar by Guest Instructor
- Mudansha (student) Shinsa (Audition for Grade)
- Yudansha (Black Belt) Shinsa.
- Annual / Special Training sessions

We cannot stress how important it is to follow the proper protocol regarding etiquette and grade



in the Dojo nor how important it is to bow before and after (in and out of) each exercise whether formal or informal. Etiquette is an integral part of Budo and without it we would be practicing nothing more than violence. The more training a person receives the more humble, dignified and calm the Karatedo practitioner should become. The beginner

must practice etiquette in order to make him/herself a better person.

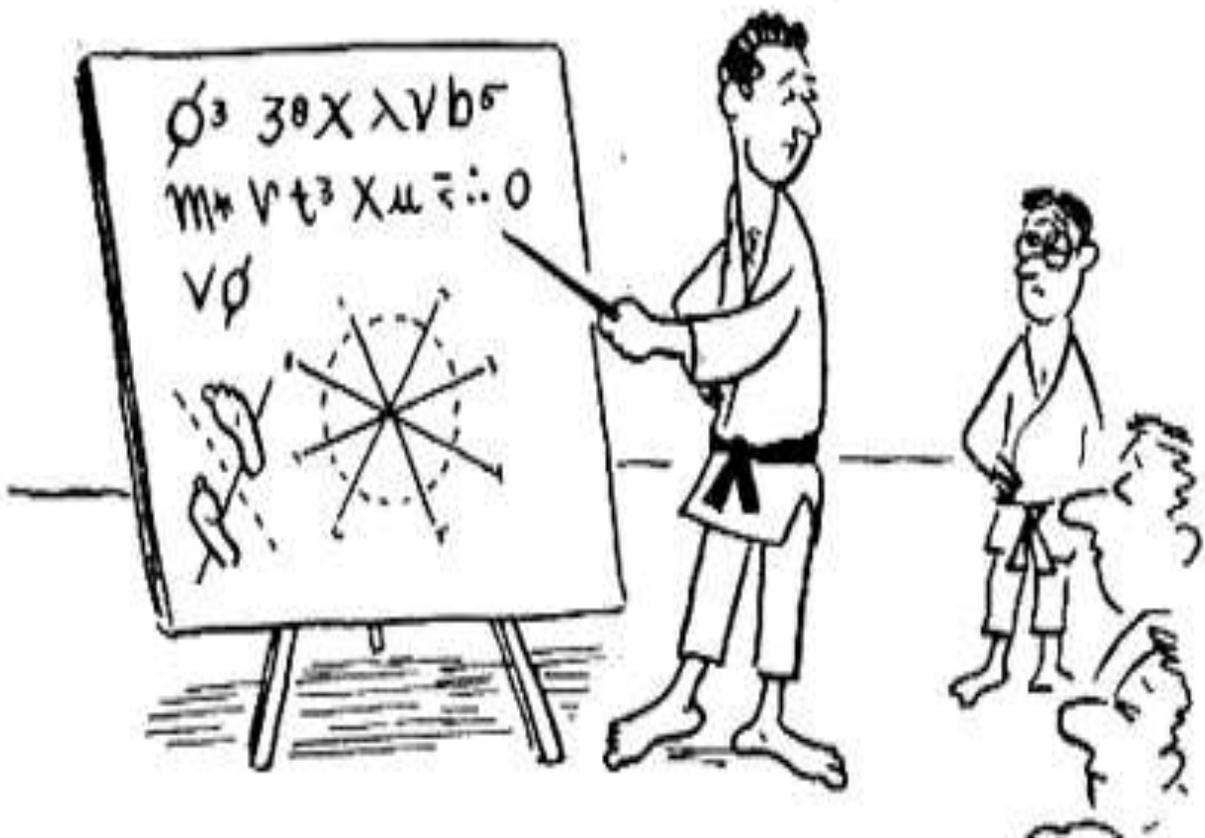
There you have it - you should have your dojo layout. Contrary to belief, Shomen is not to the East or to the west; towards Japan [yes I really have heard people say that]. This would only apply to Fung-Shui applications combined in the Dojo Layout and that would have a preference of the entrance being at the South of the room. Shomen is always farthest away from the door. A good way to also remember this is, if you took your parents out to dinner and was seated at a long table near the entrance, you would have our parents away from the door where it may be cold and people keep coming in and bumping their chair. You would do this because you have respect for them.

We note that in some Dojo, there are images of past teachers and important figures or items of merit and value to the style of Budo practiced in a particular Dojo. This area is called Shomen 正面 and located at the point of the Dojo or farthest away from the entrance; also called Kamiza 上座 . Generally, it's inappropriate to place pictures of people who are still alive in the area Shomen 正面 , Shinzen or Kamiza 上座 . Shomen 正面 is the spiritual foundation of the Dojo, and not necessarily of religious importance, rather the point of where to demonstrate respect to those who came before us and acknowledge their sacrifices which allow us to participate today. If the dojo located on the property of an Islamic Temple you may find a copy of the Quran and Islamic prayer beads. If the dojo located on the property of a Catholic Church, you may find a copy of the Bible, a cross, photo of Jesus and Rosary beads; and so on. These would be acceptably normal as the point of Kamiza 上座 because the premises the Dojo relies, are to be respected in retrospect.



“Arigato Gozai Mashita”

## SEIWA KAI HUMOR



**Sensei's lecture on proper Sanchin Dachi went a bit overboard on detail.**

**KANRYO HIGAONNA:**

**Teacher of Juhatsu Kyoda, Chojun Miyagi, and Kenwa Mabuni**

1853 to 1915

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Kanryo Higaonna

東恩納 寛量

Kanryo Higaonna was born into a family of lower nobility in Naha, Okinawa in 1853, and his father was actively involved in the trade that went back and forth between Okinawa and China. As a boy in Okinawa, Kanryo may have practiced karate (*Chinese-hand*) under Mayaa Aragaki, but research on this issue is not definitive.[i] This training, if it did take place, had less influence on the development of Kanryo Higaonna's karate than the stories that Kanryo Higaonna's father told his son about the wonders of China and about the power of the Chinese martial arts. These stories roused the imagination of young Kanryo Higaonna and made him curious about the vast Empire of China and particularly about the Chinese martial arts.[ii]

Then in 1867, when Kanryo Higaonna was about 14 years old, his life was abruptly altered. His father was killed in a fight. As the young Kanryo Higaonna grieved his father's death, he recalled the stories that his father had told him about the lethal powers of the Chinese martial arts. With these stories firmly implanted in his mind, Kanryo Higaonna "decided to travel to China to learn these deadly arts, and then return to Okinawa to avenge his father's death." [iii]

Within that same year and with vengeance still burning in his heart, Kanryo Higaonna set sail for Fuzhou in Southern China. After he arrived, he sought out a teacher in the Chinese martial arts with the intent of eventually returning to Okinawa to settle the score with the man who had killed his father. He was introduced to Ryu Ryu Ko who owned a furniture making shop and who was also an extremely skilled martial artist.[iv] Kanryo Higaonna presented him with a letter of introduction from a well-respected public official from Okinawa. After judging the young Higaonna as possessing the proper character to learn the martial arts, Ryu Ryu Ko accepted him as his student.[v]

As a condition of learning the martial arts from him, Kanryo Higaonna was required to swear an oath of allegiance to Ryu Ryu Ko. During this ceremony, he also promised to adhere to the principles of Ryu Ryu Ko and to never misuse the knowledge which he was about to learn. Young Mr. Higaonna stayed in Fuzhou for about fourteen years working for and training with Ryu Ryu Ko. Every morning for the first five or six years of his stay in China, Kanryo Higaonna walked from the Okinawan hostel in Fuzhou to the residence of Ryu Ryu Ko. During the day he labored diligently in his teacher's workshop, and in the evenings he received instruction in the martial arts prior to returning to the hostel.[vi]

During these first years of his instruction, he was taught only one kata, Sanchin. However over the passage of time, Ryu Ryu Ko and Kanryo Higaonna became extremely close, and the teacher began to treat his student like a father treats his son. Mr. Higaonna moved into the house of his mentor and received the type of detailed instruction in the Chinese martial arts that was usually transmitted only from father to son. After their relationship had deepened, Kanryo Higaonna learned eight other empty hand kata as well as the several weapons kata that were known to Ryu Ryu Ko.[vii] As a result, Mr. Kanryo Higaonna became an extraordinarily proficient martial artist.

In 1881 when Kanryo Higaonna was about 28 years old, he became somewhat homesick. With the approval of his mentor, he returned to his native Okinawa.[viii] However by this time, the fire of revenge that once burned in his heart had been extinguished by his mentorship under Ryu Ryu Ko, and he had lost all interest in avenging the death of his father.

It must be noted that the dates surrounding Mr. Kanryo Higaonna's life and the time spent in China are not without dispute. Mr. Eiichi Miyazato tells us that Kanryo Higaonna was born in 1853 and died in 1917. We are also told By Mr. Miyazato that he left for China in 1873 at the age of 23 and returned to Okinawa when he was 38. This means that Mr. Higaonna would have trained with Ryu Ryu Ko for 15 years and returned around 1888. However, there is an inconsistency in Mr. Miyazato's dates. He states that Mr. Higaonna was born in 1853, and this would have put his age at 20 when he set sail for China 1873, and age 35 when he returned in 1888.[ix] To complicate the issue even further, Richard Kim states that Mr. Higaonna was born in 1845 and died in 1915. He also states that Mr. Higaonna was 35 when he returned to Okinawa, and this would have put the date of his return at around 1880.[x]

### TEACHING in OKINAWA

Several years after he returned to Okinawa, Kanryo Higaonna began to teach his karate (still known as *Chinese-hand*) to a very small and select group of students. Training under the watchful eye of Mr. Higaonna was extremely intense.[xi] Additionally, each student had to ask permission to study with him and had to complete a period of character evaluation in order to be accepted as one of his students. Any student could be dismissed from Higaonna's tutelage for having a violent character or for violating social norms.[xii]

Of this cadre of students who trained for lengthy periods with Kanryo Higaonna, three of them eventually established their own styles modern karate-do based on his teachings. Juhatsu Kyoda would establish To'on Ryu (*Higaonna Style*). Chojun Miyagi would create Goju Ryu (*Hard-Soft Style*), and Kenwa Mabuni would establish Shito Ryu (*Itosu-Higaonna Style*).[xiii]

Mr. Kanryo Higaonna learned nine empty hand kata from Ryu Ryu Ko and taught them to his students in Okinawa. These kata were Sanchin, Saifa, Seiyunchin, Sanseiryu, Shisochin, Seipai, Seisan, Kururunfa, and Suparinpei. Additionally, Mr. Higaonna learned the bo, long sword, short sword, and other weapons kata from his teacher in China.[xiv] Whereas Mr. Higaonna continued to practice and demonstrate both empty hand and weapons kata, it is not clear if he transmitted his knowledge of Chinese weaponry to his students in Okinawa.

It should not be considered unusual that Kanryo Higaonna learned both empty hand and weapon fighting arts from Ryu Ryu Ko: "In Chinese systems it is quite normal to learn weapons and empty hand arts as part of a complete package, so it is not so surprising to learn that Kanryo Higaonna was skilled in Chinese weapons. However, while he may have demonstrated them, he did not teach them, and there are no traces of Chinese weapons in any of the systems such as *Goju Ryu* or *To'on Ryu* which can be traced to him." [xv]

It must be noted that researcher Mario McKenna contends that Mr. Kanryo Higaonna did teach his Chinese weapon arts to one other person, Juhatsu Kyoda.[xvi] However, there is no evidence that Mr. Kyoda ever taught these weapon kata to any of his students. It is interesting to note that Mr. Kyoda offered his opinion on the futility of teaching the weapon arts of kobudo: "In this day and age, you don't need these sort of things (weapons)."[xvii]

One must question why Mr. Kanryo Higaonna did not teach the weapon arts that he had learned in China from Ryu Ryu Ko. Perhaps he felt what Mr. Kyoda expressed, and he too believed that these ancient weapons had little application in a modern world. Mr. Morio Higaonna offers his perspective on why Mr. Kanryo Higaonna dropped these kata from his curriculum: “Perhaps because Okinawa was in a time of peace he felt that there was no need for his students to learn weapons. He wanted to concentrate on karate, which he felt was more important to the development of the human spirit.”[xviii] These are certainly plausible explanations of Mr. Higaonna’s motives for not teaching his weapon arts that he had learned to his students.

However, it is likely that there are at least two other plausible reasons why Kanryo Higaonna did not teach others the weapon arts that he had learned in China. As we recall, by the late 1800s anti-Chinese sentiment was prevalent in Japan and Okinawa, and teaching things that were Chinese was unpopular. Hence, teaching Chinese weaponry would not have been a welcome addition to a martial art curriculum. Additionally, the Japanese greatly revered the katana (sword of the samurai), and considered other weapons to be inferior. To teach the use of the bo (wooden staff) or sai (three tined short sword), would have been looked upon with antipathy in Japanese society.

Whereas Mr. Higaonna’s motives for not teaching the weapon kata that he had learned from Ryu Ryu Ko are not entirely clear, one thing is certain. The weapon arts of Mr. Kanryo Higaonna are forever lost to posterity.

Mr. Kanryo Higaonna was tremendously influential in the development of karate-do. He went to China, learned Chinese martial arts, and brought his knowledge back to Okinawa. There in his native country, he started a new lineage of Okinawan karate. He taught this art to a cadre of young men who were subsequently inspired to take their instructor’s teachings and form new styles of traditional karate-do. In the twentieth century, the styles which can be traced to Mr. Kanryo Higaonna were spread to every inhabited continent on the globe. His teachings now reach millions of people who train in karate-do in the twenty-first century. There are few other individuals in the history of karate-do whose influence is so pervasive.

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- [i] Higaonna, Morio: *The History of Karate*: page 10
  - [ii] Higaonna, Morio: *The History of Karate*: page 9
  - [iii] Higaonna, Morio: *The History of Karate*: page 10
  - [iv] Higaonna, Morio: *The History of Karate*: pages 13-14
  - [v] Miyazato Eiichi: *Okinawan Den Goju Ryu Karate-do*: pages 20-21
  - [vi] Higaonna, Morio: *The History of Karate*: page 13
  - [vii] Higaonna, Morio: *The History of Karate*: pages 13-18
  - [viii] Higaonna, Morio: *The History of Karate*: page 18
  - [ix] Miyazato Eiichi: *Okinawan Den Goju Ryu Karate-do*: pages 20-21
  - [x] Kim, Richard: *The Weaponless Warriors*: pages 95-99
  - [xi] Higaonna, Morio: *The History of Karate*: page 20
  - [xii] Higaonna, Morio: *The History of Karate*: page 26
  - [xiii] Higaonna, Morio: *The History of Karate*: page 24
  - [xiv] Higaonna, Morio: *The History of Karate*: page 16
  - [xv] Cook, Harry: *Cook, Harry: Shotokan Karate*, page 7
  - [xvi] McKenna, Mario: *Dragon Times*: Vol. 17 page 9
  - [xvii] McKenna, Mario: *Classical Fighting Arts*, (Issue #44) page 51
  - [xviii] Higaonna, Morio: *The History of Karate*: page 51

**North America Seiwa Kai Seminar**  
**北アメリカ 誠和会 セミナー**



**JKF Goju Kai Grading**  
**November 8 - 10, 2013: Guadalajara, Mexico**



Seiyunchin Practice at the North America Seiwa Kai/JKF Goju Kai Seminar in Guadalajara, Mexico



**Group Photo at the North America Seiwa Kai/JKF Goju Kai Seminar in Guadalajara, Mexico**



**USA and Canadian Participants at the North America Seiwa Kai/JKF Goju Kai Seminar in Guadalajara**

## **The Reactions of the USA and Canadian Seiwa Kai Instructors to the Seminar in Guadalajara**

**Jim Pounds:** I found it interesting to see that Goju kumite, when done well, effectively negates size and reach – especially against competition-style kumite. It is important to note that Fujiwara Shihan's insisted that we incorporate moving basics starting with heiko dachi yoi, into *every* class warm-up. I know it doesn't sound like much, but these were 'ah-has' to me. The hundreds of other things I learned, or rather, *I am learning*, we've covered in previous seminars.

**Joe Palmintery:** The time spent on just the basic moves made me realize how important Fujiwara stress we need to bring that back to our students. You will never do a good kata without good solid basics. The grading again Fujiwara showed the proper way in stances, kicks, blocks and strikes that he wanted us to do when we are tested and how the kumite was used during the kata's.

**Kevin Moskie:** I thought the instruction was great. Fujiwara Shihan really cares about all of us based upon his emphatic corrections. If a Japanese gentleman does not emphatically correct you, it means that he does not care. I was impressed at the turn-out from the United States since not all of the people who showed up were testing.

**Mark Cramer:** I was impressed that Fujiwara Shihan began and ended each day's session with a very formal Reishiki (bowing ceremony). My feeling was that this was conducted to impress upon each of us the seriousness of the training and the respect that each of us needs to give to our training and to each other. I was equally impressed with the time spent on kihon (basics). I am certain that some of us are remiss in this aspect of our training, and Fujiwara Shihan quickly reminded us that the basics are the foundation of everything else that we do. Moreover, I learned (or in some cases remembered) many of the nuances of our kata from Geki Sai Ichi to Kururunfa.

It must be noted that the Seiwa Kai members from Mexico were extremely good hosts and treated us as family. Saturday evening's party featured music, a light show, karaoke, dancers (my favorite), a Mariachi band, a pleasant meal, and a bottle of tequila at each table. (Unfortunately, the need to stay focused on Sunday's sessions prevented me from indulging in this liquid form of hospitality.)

**Des Tuck:** "Viva Mexico, te amo" is what our US contingent was saying when we headed back to Guadalajara Airport to return to "El Norte." From November 8-10, we basked in the glow of Mexican hospitality which was effusive and warm.

For three days, Mexico Seiwakai was treated to an extravaganza of Goju basics and insights by Fujwara Sensei, (Japan) Lipinski Sensei (England) and, Naidoo Sensei, Hamabata Sensei, Tuck Sensei, Cramer Sensei and Pounds Sensei (USA), Vokey Sensei (Canada), plus a plethora of other senior instructors who worked hard not only on teaching but also at training.

The entire event was ably presented by Marco Antonio Madrid Villalobos Sensei and his seniors, who secured a safe haven in the middle of what is regarded as a fairly lawless City, and they spoiled us rotten. Nestled in the suburb of Zapopan is a neighborhood that looks like it was

airlifted out of the US, with door-to-door restaurants and stores that were familiar to us Gringo's. Applebee's and Starbucks looked like they actually belonged there. Less familiar, and less welcome was the nocturnal thumping woofers of the disco's in the area which kept everyone awake at night.

The training heavily emphasized basic kicking, blocking and punching and learning correct stances. This was a welcome refresher for the senior grades, and an essential re-orientation of the lower grades who were able to get from the source, not only the explanations, but practice movements which required some adjustment from what they had previously been taught. Once the basics had been adjusted, kata and kumite combinations followed, and were keenly absorbed.

'Lost in translation' is the phrase that comes to mind whenever one is confronted with a large group of students who have been taught by different Sensei's, and luckily the expert teaching of Fujiwara Sensei and the ever-helpful insights presented by Lipinski Sensei and others helped everyone get on track. Between the Japanese, Spanish and English, somehow by the end of three days of training, everyone was on the same page - a tribute to the teachers in any language. Tak Hamabata Sensei deserves special mention, not only for his teaching but also the valuable translation skills he shared.

The master teachers were also ably assisted by Craig Vokey Sensei and Johnpaul Williams Sensei (temporarily re-named 'Juan Pablo' for the duration of the seminar) who did a lot more teaching than they probably expected to.

Socially, the entire weekend was a blast. Aside from the informal roving that people did around the neighborhood, we were also taken to downtown Guadalajara at night with its many splendors and enjoyed a wonderful dinner in a restaurant overlooking one of the main squares. The Saturday night party on the roof of the hotel was also lots of fun, and included some amazingly talented and gorgeous Seiwakai members performing traditional dance routines, as well as Mariachis who were superb.

On the last day, after making final adjustments, a JKF Gojukai grading was held which was both earnest and spirited. A fabulous time was had by all, and everyone looks forward to the next time when we again have as good a reason to hop on an airplane and join our Mexican Seiwakai brothers and sisters for another Gojuryu gathering that won't disappoint.

**Craig Vokey:** Six Seiwakai members from Goshukan Canada travelled to the Seiwakai Seminar in Guadalajara, Mexico to train with Fujiwara Sensei, members from the USA, Mexico, and Sensei Leo from Europe. Anytime I can train with Fujiwara Sensei and senior members I always find the training interesting and important. Even the most mundane training of simple basic movement can always be adjusted and improved upon and reviewed to keep us from falling into any bad habits. I believe we all benefited from more instruction on basic movement and in the basic Kumite drills. I always enjoy the partner work and made note of the flow of the Kumite drills. I look forward to Fujiwara Sensei visiting Toronto, Canada, next May 2-4 for a Seiwakai seminar. Thank you again to Mexico members, Sensei Fujiwara, Sensei Lapinski, Sensei Vassie and Sensei Madrid. Congratulations to Mark Cramer.



The **Zapopan Basilica** was visited by several of the Seiwa Kai / JKF Goju Kai members who then walked to a nearby plaza for a late evening meal.

A description by one of our hosts from Seiwa Kai Mexico and a quick internet research revealed some interesting information about this beautiful example of European-Mexican architecture. Construction on this building began in 1689, and it is one of the city's oldest structures. It is also one of the most important; each October more than one million people (many of them barefooted) make an 8 km. (5 mile) pilgrimage from Guadalajara to the Basilica.

It was truly a pleasure to see this magnificent example of seventeenth century old-world architecture that was brought to the Americas by the Spanish. Having a late night meal while still gazing at the grandeur of this building made the evening's ambiance perfect.



**Karaoke at the Seiwa Kai party on Saturday night**



**Dancers at the Seiwa Kai Party on Saturday night**



**(L to R) Senseis Madrid, Lipinski, Fujiwara, Naidoo, and Tuck at the Seiwa Kai party**



**Senseis Vassie, Craig, and Johnpaul (aka Juanpablo) enjoy nourishment after training**