

Miscellaneous Reiki Articles

- vol. 3

by

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The Gokai

怒るな
心配すな
感謝して
業をはげめ
人に親切に

今日文けは

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Just for Today:

Don't get angry
Don't worry
Be Grateful
Work Hard
Be Kind to Others

- Mikao Usui

* * * * *

(IN)FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Is it best to learn Reiki with a Japanese master or at least a Westerner who is a master of Japanese Reiki? I want to learn Reiki like Usui and Hayashi taught it, not with all the add-ons, changes and confusion I'm told exists in western Reiki.

Well, IMO, the only way for you to be absolutely certain you are learning Reiki "like Usui and Hayashi taught it"; would be for you to invent a time machine, travel back in time and study with them directly.

And as for "add-ons, changes and confusion", contrary to what many would have us believe, this is not something unique to styles of Reiki originating in the West.

On closer inspection of 'Japanese' Reiki, we can see that all is not exactly as authentic, add-on free, and brimming with clarity as the hype would have us believe.

To begin with, even today, probably the greater majority of Reiki masters in Japan practice and teach styles of Reiki which originated in the west at a time *after* Takata-sensei's passing, or alternatively, practice and teach styles which are *derived* from (or at very least are *heavily influenced by*) modern, western, Reiki styles.

Many Japanese Reiki Masters teach Karuna Reiki, or Seichim, or other Western styles which are only loosely based on Usui Shiki Ryoho. And even those who do teach Reiki under the name 'Usui Shiki Ryoho', generally tend to teach the *modern-day version* as commonly taught in the west (Something which, with all its talk of chakras, and crystals, and Reiki Guides and 21-day cleansing periods, etc.,etc., Takata-sensei herself might have a hard time recognising as Usui Shiki Ryoho...)

Although, Takata-sensei tells us that she taught Usui Shiki Ryoho classes in Japan in the mid 1970's *, it was not until the mid 1980's that the first classes in a *modified* form of Reiki (devised by one of Takata-sensei's students) were taught in Japan and as a result, Reiki (in this modified form) gradually began to become known on the Japanese 'New Age' scene.

At least a couple of 'home grown' Japanese Reiki styles have evolved out of this particular modern Western Reiki style (though these Western influences are usually played down, with much being made of formative influences apparently having been drawn from obscure Japanese sources...)

And it is fair to say that, just as in the west, in Japan you will also find Reiki practitioners who are not averse to creating new symbols, adding new practices, and otherwise modifying and embellishing things to suit their personal views and beliefs... And of those who claim to teach 'traditional' Japanese Reiki, well it seems there is more than a little confusion and misunderstanding as to what actually constitute the 'traditional' teachings.

Take the Reiki symbols for example:

First we were told that originally there weren't any symbols used in Reiki, that they were something added - almost as an afterthought, it seems - supposedly as a means of helping people with poor levels of sensitivity to feel the 'energy' - that they were of no real importance (though if this was the case, just how drawing some unimportant 'squiggles' would help improve sensitivity, was never explained...)

Then it was claimed that the four symbols (referred to as '*shirushi*'[1]) were no longer taught as part of 'Japanese' Reiki, yet that they were still shown to students out of historical interest.[2]

Apparently the symbols did not have names; they were simply referred to as Symbol 1, Symbol 2, Symbol 3, and Symbol 4.

However, later, we were told the symbols did indeed have names. Oh, and there were only *three*, not *four*....

Yet at least one of those Japanese practitioners who claim there were only *three* symbols, actually teach and use *four* symbols themselves...

And then, apparently - whereas in Usui Shiki Ryoho (as originally taught by Takata-sensei) the *names* of the symbols were also *mantras* used in conjunction with the drawn symbols – well it seems in 'Japanese' Reiki the symbol names were *not* mantras; we were asked to believe that the symbols had separate mantras, in *addition* to the names (which er, they apparently didn't have, or...?!)

And while for a time at least, we were told that the phrases we in the west knew as the name/mantras accompanying each symbol were indeed the symbol *mantras* (but not their names), apparently some great mystical occurrence took place outside the range of our awareness, as, suddenly the phrases we in the west knew as the name/mantras accompanying each symbol, which had indeed been the symbol mantras (but not their names), were now no longer – had never been - the symbol mantras (or their names...)

According to one Japanese practitioner, the name for what, in Usui Shiki Ryoho, had been referred to as the 'power symbol', was not 'Choku rei', but Zui-un[3]

However, according to another, the name was Kumo[4]

Yet another teaches that the name is/was Un[4]

Some Japanese Practitioners draw the actual 'power symbol' itself very similarly to the way in which Takata-sensei was taught to draw it by Hayashi-sensei; though somewhat disconcertingly, the version used and taught by a couple of prominent Japanese practitioners is suspiciously similar to a modern alternative version of the power symbol, created in the late 1980's by an 'independent' Reiki master of Austrian(?) origin.

Some teach the 'power symbol' at level 2, as Takata-sensei was taught to do by Hayashi-sensei, yet others teach their version of this symbol at level 1.

Some teach the 'power symbol' as a means of intensifying the Reiki-flow; others, merely as a way of increasing byosen sensitivity.

As to the accompanying mantras (which, may - or may not - have originally been referred to as 'jumon'[5] in Japanese):
Well, some claimed that the 'power symbol' - this Zui-un, or Kumo, or Un - didn't actually have an associated jumon.[6]

However, according to others it did.

One claims the jumon was... 'Un'.

Though this 'Un' used as the jumon or mantra apparently *isn't* the same 'Un' as the 'Un' used by others as the *name* of the symbol (depending, that is, on who you ask)... It seems that in a desperate case of 'clutching at straws', certain Japanese Reiki practitioners had been attempting to manufacture a link between the Reiki symbols and symbols used by the Kurama Kokyo sect (based at the temple on mount Kurama since 1949).

The Kurama Kokyo worship a triune deity: Sonten - the three aspects of which are represented by the deities Mao-son, Bishamon-ten, and Senju-Kannon.

Now, in this trinity, Mao-son is seen as representing 'the power of Sonten'. Mao-son's emblem is the Sanscrit character 'hum'. In Japan this is pronounced 'Un'.

And as Mao-son is seen as the 'power', it would seem it was only a short (if uncreative and misguided) jump to the conclusion that the emblem of Mao-son was most likely associated with the Reiki 'power symbol'.

Hence, the jumon associated with the 'power symbol' must have obviously have been 'Un' all along...

Some, went further than this, claiming that not only was the word 'Un' the jumon of the 'power symbol' but that the visual depiction of this Sanscrit character 'Hum'/'Un' was actually the original *form* of the 'power symbol'; and that two further Sanscrit characters - representing Senju-Kannon and Bishamon-ten - were respectively the original forms of the 'mental/emotional' and 'distance' symbols...

Of course, it seems others had created different 'truths'...

Some claim that the 'mental/emotional' symbol (which didn't have a name?) was apparently originally called Muryou-ju,[7] or depending on who you ask: *Mugen* Muryou-ju [7]

Some claim its jumon is Fukuju[8]; though others claim Fukuju is its *name*, not its jumon...

Though yet others have said the jumon is actually a 'modified' version of the more familiar 'Seiheki'.

And some say the 'mental/emotional' symbol does not have a jumon. While some use the 'mental/emotional' symbol in conjunction with recitation of the Gokai ('Reiki Principles').

Some Japanese Practitioners draw the actual 'mental/emotional' symbol itself very similarly to the way in which Takata-sensei was taught to draw it by Hayashi-sensei;

however, others use what can only be described as a partial/incomplete version of the symbol; and yet others still, use a modified form of this latter incomplete version.

As to what is referred to as the 'Distance symbol' in Usui Shiki Ryoho:
Well, most Japanese Practitioners, it seems, draw the actual 'distance symbol' symbol itself very similarly to the way in which Takata-sensei was taught to draw it by Hayashi-sensei, with minor variation in the number of strokes used (some use 21, some 22).

According to some Japanese Practitioners, the jumon is pronounced Hon Ja Ze Sho Nen (the Ja is another 'reading' of the kanji pronounced as Sha in the more familiar form: Hon Sha Ze Sho Nen).

Others do not consider the symbol to actually be a 'symbol' as such - claiming rather that drawing/writing the visual aspect of what we deem the 'distant symbol' constitutes part of reciting a jumon...

Some claim the vocalised element (i.e. the *jumon*-proper) should be pronounced Hon Ja Ze Sei Nen (the Sei is another 'reading' of the kanji pronounced as Sho in the more familiar form: Hon Sha Ze Sho Nen).

As for the 'master symbol':

Some Japanese practitioners would have us believe that the 'master symbol' was not traditionally part of Reiki at all (but rather an add-on, originating several years after Usui-sensei's passing!!)...

However, of those Japanese practitioners who *do* use and teach the 'master' symbol (and this group actually *includes* some of those who claim the 'master' symbol is not a original Reiki symbol !!), most, it seems, draw the symbol in its regular three-*kanji* form.

And, just as happened in the west after Takata-sensei's passing - where many and varied new uses were dreamed up for the 'master symbol' - so too in Japan the symbol is widely used far beyond its sole original purpose[9]

While most also tend to use 'Dai Ko Myo' as the jumon, some apparently vocalise 'Dai Mitsu Mei' instead. [Simply for the sake of being different, perhaps?].

(Mitsu is simply another 'reading' of the kanji pronounced as Ko in the more familiar form: Dai Ko Myo, and Mei is another 'reading' of the kanji pronounced as Myo).

And as is the case with the 'distance symbol', no doubt there will also be some who claim that the 'master symbol' is not a 'symbol' at all - that drawing/writing the visual aspect (i.e. the three kanji) merely constitutes part of reciting a jumon...

Notes

[* See: http://www.aetw.org/reiki_in_japan.htm]

[1] Shirushi - a sign, symbol, 'glyph' or graphic visual representation; also a mark made with a stamp or seal.

[2] Interesting, as at that time many western practitioners were also no longer using the symbols...

[3] Zui-un translates as 'Auspicious Cloud' (– a good omen). It is also the name of a brand of Aloeswood Incense!

[4] Kumo and Un are two alternative 'readings' of, i.e. ways of pronouncing, the same kanji

character meaning 'cloud'

[5] Jumon - an incantation; a spell, a charm; a magic word, 'words of power'/ 'words filled with spirit'.

[6] or at least, they themselves had not been *taught* its jumon

[7] Muryo-ju = 'Infinite Felicitation' or 'Uncountable Blessing' - also the name of a specific manifestation of Amida Butsu.

Mugen = Infinity, Infinite Compassion, Infinite Wisdom, Unconditional Light

[8] Fuku ju means something like "a long and prosperous life" (used as a toast, it is much like saying "Cheers!"). [It is also the name of a popular brand of sake]

[9] i.e. as part of the initiation process



On a web site I read about a Reiki Master who was meant to be trained by one of Mikao Usui's students still alive today who is known as the Soke Dai. It said Soke Dai is a Buddhist term for the current lineage bearer, tho someone else said it had to do with martial arts? This Reiki Master gives his lineage as Usui Mikao, Soke Dai, and then himself

Well, I must say that I personally have previously never heard Soke-dai described as being a Buddhist title.

The term Soke-dai is indeed often used today in relation to Japanese martial arts; however, it seems, many westerners who practice Japanese martial arts are somewhat confused as to the precise meaning of the term, and thus use it incorrectly – interestingly enough, usually believing that it refers to the person considered to be the current head (or as you put it) 'lineage bearer' of a particular art.

In order to understand the term Soke-dai we first need to have an understanding of the term Soke (so-ke)

Traditionally, the term Soke (or more fully Sodenke) has been used denote the head of a family-(or guild-)based discipline, skill or art.[1].

The term Soke is used to refer to the original 'Founding Father'[2] of the discipline/skill/art, and is *also* to refer to those who have *succeeded* the founder as hereditary/generational 'Family Heads' of that tradition.

It has long been the Japanese way of things to 'keep it in the family' with the teaching and practice of specific arts being closely guarded, regulated and controlled by certain families or 'guilds'; and with the innermost 'secrets' of the art only being shared from father to son down through the generations.

When the Soke or Head died (or retired) it was common practice that he would be replaced by a blood-line descendant, who would in turn assume the role of 'Family Head'. On occasion, however (for example if the Soke had no male offspring) the Soke, might designate another blood-relative to take on the role of Head of Family after his retirement/death. More rarely, the Soke might designate a non blood-relative - an 'adopted' son, or even a son-in-law to succeed him.

This intended next-generation successor (be it offspring, other blood-relative, adoptive son or son-in-law) would have been trained to the highest level - a senior instructor in the given discipline/skill/art, and would have been made privy to the innermost secrets of the tradition by the Soke.

It was quite common that this intended 'inheritor of the lineage' of the given discipline/skill/art would be referred to by the title Soke-dai.

However, as stated, many westerners have misunderstood the meaning and significance of the term Soke-dai [and likewise, of the term Soke].[3] Many seem to think that the term Soke refers *solely* to the originator of the art, and that Soke-dai means something like "the originator's current successor" and that the individual will still be referred to as Soke-dai after the Soke has retired or died. Yet this is not the case.

Now while Soke is a title for the founder of an art, as mentioned above, it is also a title for the generational Heads of that art.

And while Soke-dai is indeed a title (usually) held by the Soke's designated successor[4], this latter title does not actually refer *directly* to the individual's status as designated next-generation successor *per se*.

Rather it refers to their high-ranking status within the art.

As mentioned, the designated successor would be a senior instructor in the given discipline/skill/art, trained to the highest level; to all intents and purposes, an equal to the Soke in all but name.

The term Soke-dai actually speaks to this fact.

Soke-dai (which is actually a shortened version of: Soke-dairi) implies 'in place of the Soke' - a proxy – a stand-in for, or official representative of, the current Soke.

A Soke-dai is someone authorised to speak, act and teach on the *current* Soke's behalf when, for whatever reason, the Soke can not be present.

More directly put, Soke-dai is simply a 'Deputy Soke'.

Sometimes, within a large family/guild-based art, there may be several Soke-dai – several Deputies - to assist the Soke with day-to-day instruction and teaching, administrative duties, meetings, etc.

Yet only one Soke-dai will be deemed 'heir apparent'. [5]

And when the *current* Soke eventually retires (or dies), this 'heir apparent' will (barring unforeseen circumstance) assume the position of Head of Family. From this point on they are *no longer* referred to as Soke-dai for they are no longer the Soke's *deputy*.

They now hold the title Soke, and as such will have one or more deputies (Soke-dai) of their own.

However, to distinguish them from previous Soke, their title will often be augmented with an ordinal number.

The Original Head of Family – the founder of the art – may be referred to (retrospectively) as Shodai Soke (i.e. 1st generation head), his immediate successor, as Nidai Soke (2nd generation head). The Nidai Soke's successor, as Sandai Soke (3rd generation head), and so on.

Thus I feel it rather confusing that the term Soke-dai would be used to indicate the current Head of a given art (at least, that is, by anyone familiar with traditional Japanese protocol in such matters)

The term Soke-dai really only has meaning where used in relation to Soke.

For there to be a Soke-dai or deputy, there would of necessity also have to be someone currently fulfilling the role of Soke – someone for the Soke-dai to deputise *for*.

NOTES:

[1] While traditionally used in relation to various other arts, the terms Soke and Soke-dai have only really been used in relation to *martial* arts for about 130 years or so.

[2] i.e. one who has independently developed their own unique art or discipline (or alternatively, has modified an existing art or discipline to the extent that it was thus recognised by the individual's peers as constituting a 'new' style)

[3] This is commonly the case with many martial artists who have had no direct contact with or experience of the particular art as actually practised in Japan.

[4] While the Soke is still *alive*

[5] And, while all the Soke-dai will have been highly trained, traditionally, the Soke will only share the innermost 'secrets' of the art with this one chosen successor

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**THE "HEART'S BLOOD" METHOD:
A self-treatment practice as taught by Kenji Hamamoto**

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The Heart's Blood (*shinketsu*) method is a simple and highly effective self-treatment practice created by Hekikuu Reiki's Kenji Hamamoto.

It focuses on the heart - the actual physical heart - not the 'heart (thymus) centre'

It involves permitting Reiki to flow into the chambers of the left side of heart - or rather, into the *space within the chambers* - and more importantly, into the blood that passes continually *through* these chambers.

By permitting Reiki to flow into these chambers, the already oxygen-rich blood passing through the chambers also becomes 'Reiki-rich' and, just as the blood carries oxygen to every cell of the body, so, it can also carry Reiki to every cell as well.

[Freshly-oxygenated blood travels, from the lungs, into the left atrium of the heart, through the mitral valve, and into the left ventricle, which pumps it through the aortic valve into the left aorta, then out throughout the circulatory system to nourish the brain and the rest of the body. Eventually the now de-oxygenated blood cycles back in through the right side of the heart to the lungs for re-oxygenation, then back in through the left side of the heart - then out throughout the circulatory system, and so on...]

The Heart's Blood method:

Sit, stand or lie comfortably in a position that does not impede blood flow (do not sit cross-legged, do not sit in *seiza*; do not stand too rigidly, etc)

Let your breath flow freely (do not try to influence the rhythm of the breath in any way)

Clear your mind

Let your body relax

Raise your hands and place them so as to cover your heart

Your right hand should be resting so as to cover the upper half of your heart, your left hand covering the lower half - the thumb of your left hand resting against, or perhaps actually on, the little / 'pinkie' finger of your right hand.

Become aware of your heart-pulse (do not try to influence the rhythm of the pulse in any way).

Be aware of the blood travelling through the chambers on the left side of your heart.

Lightly focus your attention here, and allow Reiki to flow.

Keep your attention at your heart - do not be tempted to follow the blood as it moves throughout your circulatory system.

In the knowledge that Reiki reaches wherever the blood reaches:

- be at peace in your heart
- feel gratitude in your heart

Continue to treat the Heart's Blood for as long as you wish, or until the flow of Reiki naturally subsides.

Complete your practice by showing respect for the Reiki:
perform *rei* [i.e. bowing] or whatever you feel appropriate.

NOTE:

While the Heart's Blood method is primarily a self-treatment practice, it can *technically* be used to treat others. However, when it comes to treating female clients, there are of course issues regarding privacy and touch which need to be addressed.

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THE MEANING OF 'TE-ATE'

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The Japanese word *te-ate* is formed from two *kanji* characters:

手
(*te*)
and
当
(*ate*)

In isolation, *te* means 'hand'; *ate* means 'to aim, 'to put', 'to place', 'to apply'

The combined word *te-ate*:

手 当

- which can also be written in the phonetic *hiragana* script also written as:

てあて

can mean “apply hands” or “hands-on”; it can also mean, “touching with the hands”, “handwork”, or “put hand (on injury)” and, by extension, has come to mean 'Treatment'*

In a modern medical sense, for example, the phrase "te-ate o suru":

手当をする

(lit: 'a putting on of hands') can mean 'to treat (an injury)' or 'to nurse' or 'to cure'.

However, the word *te-ate* has, for centuries been a *generic* term covering numerous different treatment practices involving the *direct-contact* application of the hands - whether as manipulative therapy or as 'energetic' laying-on-of-hands type intervention – for the purpose of treating *physical* injury, trauma, ailment, sickness and disease.

Thus, the *pressure-point*, *energy stimulation/transfer*, and *manipulative* techniques (including: static touch, rubbing, kneading, palpating, tapping, pressing, twisting, pulling, mobilisation of joints, etc.) as practiced within therapeutic arts such as Shiatsu, Amatsu, Seitai, Amma, Shindenjutsu, Ampuku, Seiki Jutsu, Kiatsu, Kuatsu, and even Western-style massage, can all be said to constitute 'te-ate'.

So, what about the art of 'Reiki' – can 'Reiki' be considered a form of te-ate?

Well certainly Reiki *Ryoho* - when given 'hands-on' – can be.

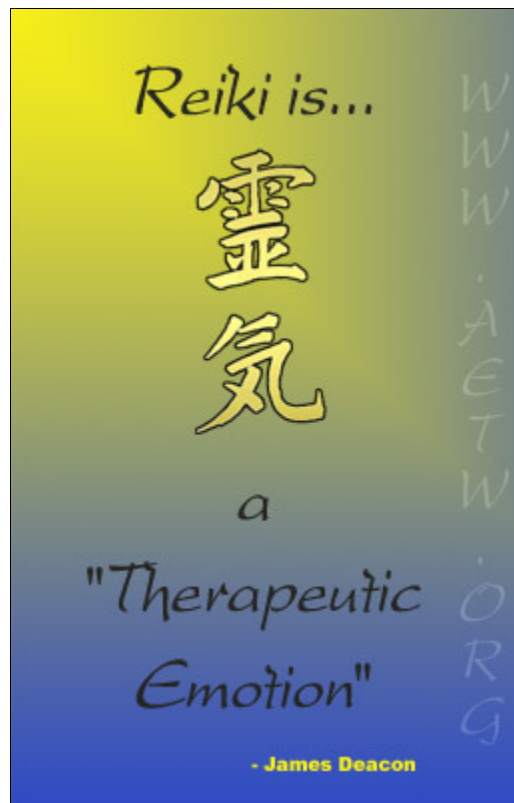
However, when Reiki *Ryoho* is given as a 'hands-off' aura-treatment, or when it is given at a *distance*, technically it does *not* constitute te-ate.

Likewise, the spiritual teachings and spiritual development (*Reiho*) aspects of Reiki (and other similar disciplines) *cannot* be described as te-ate.

Te-ate refers specifically to the *hands-on treatment* of *physical* conditions.

*Just to confuse things a little, in other usage, the same word te-ate - written using the same kanji - can refer to an allowance, benefit, or compensatory payment, e.g. as in *jido te-ate* (Child Allowance)

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COFFEE-BREAK TIME...

James Deacon's
REKIWORD

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No. 3

QUESTIONS:

DOWN

- 1 A Reiki technique for sensing for energetic fluctuations
- 3 Japanese term for a 'Reiki marathon', or 'relay' treatment
- 5 Name of Mrs Takata's husband
- 6 Japanese term often translated as "Master" though perhaps more properly: "Teacher"
- 10 "_____ -ho" 'Dry Brushing Method' - an aura-cleansing technique and component of Hasurei-Ho
- 12 Number of Master-level students Certified by Hawayo Takata
- 15 Japanese term for any of the Reiki symbols
- 16 Mikao Usui's wife
- 17 Hawayo Takata was born on this day in 1900 (9,3,)
- 18 Town where Mikao Usui died as a result of a stroke
- 19 "Toshitaka _____" author of "*Iyashi No Te*" (1995) - believed to be the first modern day Reiki book written by a Japanese master
- 20 "_____ Chiryō-Ho". Japanese term for the Distant Healing method
- 22 A ritual gesture formed by placing the hands together in a prayer-like position
- 24 Name of the village in Gifu Prefecture, where Mikao Usui was born
- 25 Number of Reiki Symbols taught by Hawayo Takata at level Two
- 27 "Usui _____ Ryōho" - term used by Hawayo Takata to refer to the art of Reiki
- 31 Number of Reiki Symbols taught by Hawayo Takata at level Three

ACROSS

- 2 *Kyo dake wa*: "Just for _____"
- 4 Japanese term for the second level of Reiki training
- 7 Poetry penned by the Emperor Meiji - said to recited or sung at meetings of the original Usui Reiki Society
- 8 Traditional Japanese kneeling posture, sitting back on (or between) the heels
- 9 "_____ -ho" Japanese Reiki technique of healing with the eyes
- 11 "_____ -ho" A version of *seiheki chiryō ho* ('habit treatment method') in which no Reiki symbols are used

- 13 Japanese term for the first or 'entry' level of Reiki training
- 14 The '____ Book' - common name for a small volume more properly called 'Leiki: a Memorial to Takata-sensei'. Compiled by Takata sensei's daughter, Alice Takata Furumoto, in 1982
- 21 First name of Mr Eguchi - friend and student of Usui Sensei and author of "*Te-no-hira Ryoji Nyumon*" (An Introduction to Healing with the Palms)
- 22 Japanese term for the Five Reiki Principles
- 23 "Horsesaddle Mountain" outside Kyoto where Usui-sensei did his 21-day Meditation (6,4,)
- 26 Temple in the Suginami district of Tokyo where Mikao Usui's remains are interred
- 28 Mrs Takata's middle name
- 29 Japanese term for the third level of Reiki training
- 30 "____ -ho" a Japanese Reiki technique of healing with the breath
- 32 Chujiro Hayashi's wife's name

(For answers, see page 23)

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VARIOUS SYSTEMS OF GRADING *POSSIBLY* USED IN REIKI OVER THE YEARS?

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Originally, so we are told, Usui-Sensei did not employ a formal system of grading in his Spiritual Development and Healing Method.

However, according to *some* sources, in 1923 he introduced a grading system which was being used by Jigoro Kano (creator of Judo), and as a result, the levels (with 'Rokkyu' being the lowest) in the Usui system are said to have become:

- 6th Class - Rokkyu
- 5th Class - Gokyu
- 4th Class - Yonkyu
- 3rd Class - Sankyu
- 2nd Class - Nikkyu (CKR symbol taught at this level)
- 1st Class - Ikkyu (SHK symbol)
- 1st Degree - Shodan (HSZSN symbol)
- 2nd Degree - Nidan (DKM symbol)
- 3rd Degree - Sandan
- 4th Degree - Yodan
- 5th Degree - Godan
- 6th Degree - Rokudan
- 7th Degree - Shichidan (/Nanadan)

(This Ryokku-to-Shichidan grading was also supposedly used by 'Tatsumi-san', whom Dave King claims to have met and studied with in the mid 1990's)

[No mention is made however of Usui -Sensei using the final three levels from the Kano system:

- 8th Degree - Hachidan
- 9th Degree - Kudan
- 10th Degree - Judan]

[Note: also in Kano's grading system, the practitioners at the level of Godan and higher are considered 'Masters']

The story goes that this Kano-inspired format was in use up until November 1925, when, under the influence of Juusaburo Gyuda (also known as Ushida) and Kanichi Taketomi, a new grading system came into use.

The grades above Nidan were apparently dropped - and the remaining grades re-formatted into four new levels, called:

- 4th Class - Shoden (first grade)
- 3rd Class - Chuden (middle grade)
- 2nd Class - Okuden (inner grade)
- 1st Class - Kaiden (grade of explanation)

Weeks later, in Jan 1926, the grading levels were, so we are told, changed once more to:

- 4th Class - Shoden (which now included Chuden, and had four sub-levels)
- 3rd Class - Okuden zenki ('first term' of the Okuden grade)
- 2nd Class - Okuden kuki ('second term' of the Okuden grade)
- 1st Class - Shinpiden ('mystery teaching' grade)

Between them, Okuden kuki and Shinpiden now covered what had formerly been taught as Kaiden, with the Shinpiden level having almost the same content as the Sandan level in the grading system originally used by Usui-Sensei.

Fumio Ogawa tells us that he learnt Reiki from his (step?)father, Keizo (a student of Kanichi Taketomi, and also a good friend of Usui-Sensei), and that in Keiso's day the system was comprised of six grades/ levels.

These were called:

- 6th Class - Dai Rokutu
- 5th Class - Dai Gotu
- 4th Class - Dai Yontu
- 3rd Class - Dai Santu
- 2nd Class - Okuden zenki
- 1st Class - Okuden kuki

About 1930-31 Hayashi-Sensei is supposed to have begun teaching four levels:

- Shoden (which incorporated: rokyu, gokyu, yonkyu and sankyu teachings)
- Chuden: (which incorporated: nikyū, ikkyū and shodan)
- Okuden: (equivalent to nidan)
- Shinpiden: (equivalent to sandan)

While I feel it is important to be clear that all claims as to the evolving nature of the grading system up to this point constitute little more than hearsay, we do know that from 1935 - 1936 at least, Hayashi-sensei was using the system of three grades, familiar to all students of Usui Shiki Ryoho.

Note:

While many now refer to the three Usui Shiki Ryoho grades as 'Level 1', 'Level 2', and 'Master Level' (or alternatively: 'First Degree', 'Second Degree', 'Master Degree') - certificates issued by Takata-sensei use the terms: 'Introductory', 'Intermediate' and 'Advanced' for the respective courses of training.

After Takata-Sensei's death, in some of the newly evolving, 'western' styles of Reiki - often referred to as 'independent' styles of Reiki - a four-level grading system came into use. The Takata-style First and Second Degrees remained essentially the same, however, the Third Degree became divided into two parts, often referred to as 3 and 3a - with the student receiving the full Master Level attunement/initiation in the first part, but not being taught the attunement/initiation process itself until the second part.*

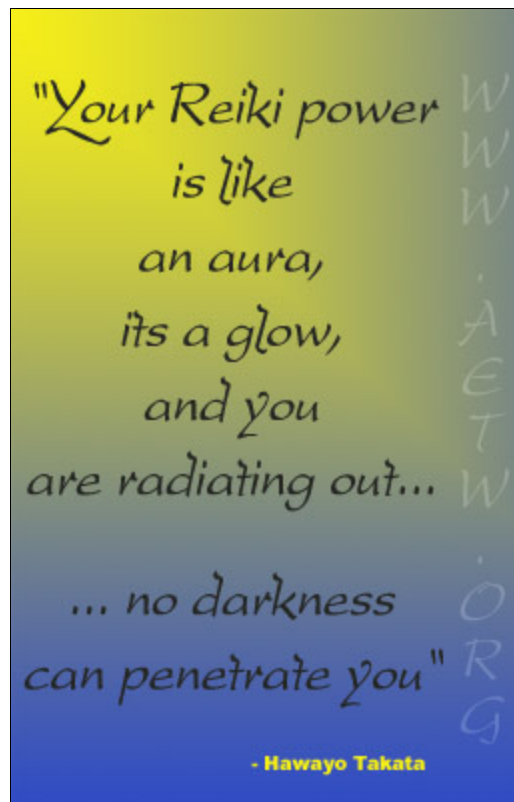
The four-part grading system: Shoden, Okuden, Shinpiden, & Goiku Kaiden ('highest level') used in the modern-day Japanese Reiki system, Gendai Reiki Ho, divides up the various elements of Reiki training in a very similar way to the 'independent', western style grading mentioned above.

The gradings: Shoden, Chuden, Okuden & Shinpiden used in another recently developed Japanese Reiki style - Komyo Reiki - also bear strong similarities to the 'independent' western system; while Jikiden Reiki, which *professes* to be based on the system of Reiki treatment taught by Hayashi-Sensei in the *late* 1930's**, employs the following gradings: Shoden, Okuden, Shihan-kaku (Assistant Teacher), Shihan (Teacher), & Dai-Shihan.

*While some teachers claim this modern four-level system is an acknowledgement of the four-level grading system supposedly used during the late 1920's, early 30's, it has also been suggested that perhaps the reverse is in fact the case, and that claims about the earlier division of the system into four-levels are little more than a means of justifying the addition of another level (and with it, an additional set of fees...)

** That is, at a period *after* Takata-sensei had completed her apprenticeship with Hayashi-sensei.

* * * * *



* * * * *

“Curiouser and curiouser!” cried Alice ...

Lewis Carroll

or:

**THE STRANGE TALE OF THE '1986 REIKI JOURNAL ARTICLE'
THAT NEVER WAS...**

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The short article, reprinted below, has appeared on more than one website and claims to be from a 1986 issue of 'The Reiki Journal'.

*['The Reiki Journal' is a publication of **The American Reiki Association, Inc.** - the organisation founded in 1980 by Barbara Ray and Takata-Sensei.]*

Tracing the History: a Japanese Book on Dr. Usui

"Mieko Mitsui, a certified instructor of the Radiance Technique® who lives in New York City and teaches there and in Japan, has researched more information about Real Reiki® in Japan during trips last year and this. In a trip in 1985, she reported meeting with an elderly man at the home of friends, where Mieko was told of a privately printed book, "Usui Reiki Gakkai", which reportedly talks about "Reiki" and a man named Usui. The book was described as an academic text, published just over a decade ago, by a mathematician at Meiji University in Tokyo.

Mieko said she was told that Dr. Usui was born in 1865 and died in 1926. She also said that the seven degrees of the Dr. Usui system of Real Reiki® were numbered in reverse in the Japanese tradition - that the Seventh Degree was the first level studied, the equivalent to the First Degree in the U.S. (Mieko explained that this reverse order can be found in other areas of Japanese culture. Addresses on a letter, for example, are often given in the reverse of the form in the U.S. and the western world, with the country listed first, then the district, then city, followed by a person's address. A person's name is given last.)

Mieko said that the basic philosophy of "Reiki," according to the elderly man she interviewed, "is that the universe is ourselves...the act of carrying Light." Mieko said she was also given a second book on healing sciences by friends in Japan. This book, whose title roughly translates to "The Mastery of Healing with the Hands", mentions numerous philosophies and techniques for healing. There are passages about a great healer named Usui, according to Mieko, although the book does not specifically mention "Reiki" and the man called Usui in the book is not identified by a first name."

Now, we know that in 1985, Ms. Mitsui (who now apparently lives in Hawaii), did indeed go back to Japan on a Reiki fact-finding mission.

We know that she started teaching 'western'-style Reiki there [her students include Hiroshi Doi - founder of Gendai Reiki Ho] and in the process could be said to have been responsible for single-handedly sparking a 'Reiki Revival' in Japan.

We also know that Meiko Mitsui's initial discoveries have, over the years, inspired other Reiki practitioners to carry out research into both the origins of Reiki, and also into its current surviving forms of expression in Japan.

However, this is the thing I find slightly strange.

In June this year (2003) I contacted The **American Reiki Association, Inc.** [or, as it is now called: The Radiance Technique International Association].

It was my intention to acquire either an actual back-copy of the relevant issue of 'The Reiki Journal' - or at very least, a good quality Xerox of the original article itself - along with permission to reproduce it here in the All Energy-Therapies Web, Reiki Pages.

What follows is an extract from the reply, by the TRTIA's Director of Office Services, to my enquiries:

*"...we have gone back into storage and found our archive copies of "The Reiki Journal" from 1986. There were 4 published, for January-March, April-June, July-September, and October-December. I have now looked through each and every one of them, and there are no articles about Meiko Mitsui ...
... Whatever the article you found may be, it is not an excerpt from "The Reiki Journal" in 1986...*

It seems that it is a fabrication, as are many pages on the Web. Feel free to let the person who posted it know that it is not from a 1986 issue of "The Reiki Journal," too..."

So, this leads me to question, if this isn't simply a case of someone not being thorough - i.e. not checking the purported origins of a document before publishing it on the web, why would anyone want to fabricate such an article?

Unless....

* * * * *



* * * * *

REIKIWORD No 3, Answers

DOWN

1 Byosen 3 Renzoku 5 Saichi 6 Sensei 10 Kenyoku 12 Twentytwo 15 Shirushi 16 Sadako
 17 Christmas Eve 18 Fukuyama 19 Mochizuki 20 Enkaku 22 Gassho 24 Taniai 25 Three
 27 Shiki 31 One

ACROSS

2 Today 4 Okuden 7 Gyosei 8 Seiza 9 Gyoshi 11 Nentatsu 13 Shoden 14 Gray (Grey)
 21 Toshihiro 22 Gokai 23 Kurama Yama 26 Saihoji 28 Hiromi 29 Shinpiden 30 Koki 32 Chie

* * * * *

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