



SHINKI NEWS

NO. 39

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Soke's Word

Text: Michael Daishiro Nakajimav

A vertical scroll with the Japanese characters '神氣' (Shinkiki) written in calligraphy. The scroll is positioned to the left of the Soke, partially obscured by a window frame.

Dear Shinkiryu members, dear friends,

these days, most people have the feeling that our world has completely fallen apart: enormous environmental problems while awareness of these issues is simultaneously declining. Egocentric and authoritarian attitudes among state leaders seem to be becoming socially acceptable. We are witnessing unprecedented displays of material and military power and their ruthless application. We are witnessing immense manipulation of opinions on social media, which is becoming increasingly sophisticated through technological advancements. The accumulation of enormous wealth by a very few, while on the other hand, more and more people are being pushed into poverty, unable to find housing, and even forced to live on the streets, even in the cold winter. Huge sums are being spent on the search for possible life on Mars, while we are making our own "paradise" on Earth increasingly uninhabitable. I don't even need to elaborate on this further. It is enough to watch the daily news in the mainstream media and simply open our eyes to what is happening around us.

What conclusions do we draw from this? Should we despair? Become pessimistic? Go on a rampage? That these are not solutions is evident to our "normal" human judgment, although one increasingly has to wonder whether such normality can still be taken for granted today. As human beings, and especially as Budo practitioners, we have only one option: to bravely and steadfastly stand against this cynical and materialistic view of humanity and the attitudes that arise from it.

It is not required that we always play the role of the unwavering Superhero. As human beings, we are sometimes sad, defeated, or hurt. The challenge lies in standing up again and training ourselves in this ability. We must not complacently rely on our supposed strength—it becomes meaningless if we are honest with ourselves. Our strength comes from elsewhere, from the loving depth that has willed us and our world into existence. We must engage with this depth much more and become one with it.

Practicing Budo means getting to know our limits. Meditating means experiencing that we can go beyond these limits. In this way, we not only find protection and comfort for ourselves, allowing us to rest peacefully within them, but we also gain the inner strength to stand up for others. If we want to grow, we must at least move beyond the mental stage of kindergarten or elementary school.

Susanne and I wish you a meaningful and reflective Lent and Holy Week, leading to a joyful and blessed Easter celebration.

Remarks

Syria Update

There are some small positive developments for our beneficiaries in Syria, which Susanne has written about in detail. I have forwarded her message to our previous donors, to whom we would like to express our heartfelt gratitude once again on behalf of the recipients. If you have not received the update but are interested, please feel free to contact me at: nakajima.shinki@gmail.com

Shinki Election 2025

The New Examination Board and Trainer Commission

We have voted.

21 people cast their votes in advance via email or post, and 44 submitted their ballots directly at the Dan seminar. Overall, with 162 eligible voters, this results in a voter turnout of 40%.

As decided by the commissions, Nakajima Shihan selected the members of the Examination Board from the ten candidates who received the most votes. The result could be announced immediately.

The newly elected commissions are composed as follows:

(*including representatives appointed independently of the election):

Examination Board

Claudia Buder
Michael Danner
Henry Kowalik
Rick Soriano
Duncan Underwood*

Helmut Theobald*
Danijel Tomašević*

Trainer Commission

Matthias Becker
Gunnar Clausen
Bernd Hubl
Katrin Reimer
Birgit Smentek

Minutes of the Meeting of the Examination Board and the Trainer Commission

Heidelberg, March 15, 2023, 2:00–4:00 PM

Chair: Duncan Underwood

Minutes: Katrin Reimer

Present in person:

Michael Daishiro Nakajima Shihan

Examination board (PK, old): Duncan Underwood, Claudia Buder, Henry Kowallik, Bernd Hubl, Rick Soriano

Trainer commission (TK, old): Gunnar Clausen, Michael Danner, Katrin Reimer, Danijel Tomašević, Birgit Smentek

Guests: Matthias Böttcher, Daniel Haprich, Johannes Hoffmann, Marius Trzaski, Georg Umlauf

Not present: TK: Helmut Theobald

TK: Reports from the Clubs

Summary:

- The adult-only groups are generally stable, though usually small or consisting of a small core of regularly active participants. There is little to no growth.
- The children's and youth groups are larger, with more fluctuation due to regular new arrivals and age-related departures.
- Several clubs/groups are facing increased bureaucratic and financial hurdles: higher minimum participant requirements (especially in university sports), reduced opportunities for trial sessions, and more complex registration and billing processes.

Individual matters:

- Karlsruhe: The club has been a member of the Aikido Association of Baden-Württemberg (FABW*) since this year. They hope this will provide, among other things, support in financing seminars. A report on their experience will follow.
*The association represents Aikido within the regional sports federations of Baden-Württemberg. The structure of these regional sports federations varies from one federal state to another. In some states, for example, Aikido is represented exclusively by the DAB (Deutsch (German) Aikido Bund (Federation)).
- Wiesbaden: Bernd is a member of the Leisure and Sports Commission of the City of Wiesbaden; and, in this role, takes part in meetings at City Hall twice a year. The commission, together with the mayor, the head of the sports department, other members, and city council representatives, makes decisions regarding funding and grants for Wiesbaden-based clubs, as well as other matters concerning sports in Wiesbaden.
- Dresden: Due to the increased organizational demands in university sports, Henry has contacted several sports clubs to see if there is interest in taking on an Aikido group. So far, no responses have been received.
- Weimar: For long-standing members who no longer have student status, participation fees have recently increased significantly. Alternative solutions are being explored here as well (possibly a collaboration with PSV Weimar).
- Munich: The club offers beginner courses every quarter, which are promoted through various channels (including social media). The courses are going well and are bringing new members to the group.
- Oldenswort: Frank now leads the children's training together with his wife. Her experience as a physical education teacher brings structure and discipline to the group. The 15 children are responding very positively: there is less "kid-group chaos" and more enjoyment in training.
- Flensburg and Schkeuditz: By forgoing trainer fees, each Aikido group enjoys greater freedom within their respective sports clubs: minimum group size and regular

attendance are assessed less strictly, allowing the focus to remain on training rather than member recruitment.

Resolutions:

- For the upcoming meeting, Duncan will send a request or reminder to all clubs around the turn of the year in order to collect shareable information on training, achievements, challenges, etc., in advance — including from clubs not directly represented.
- If a trainer who is not a commission member wishes to attend the next meeting due to a specific topic, this can be communicated when responding to Duncan and will be taken into account during the meeting preparation.

TK: From the Last Meeting: Situation Reports / Brief Profiles of the Clubs

Resolutions:

- The December issue of Shinki News will feature the first contribution from Weimar — which will also serve as the structural template for the club brief profiles. Claudia will prepare a draft and circulate it within the commission groups by mid-October for review. Feedback can be submitted until mid-November.
- Whenever a club prepares a brief profile, they are also asked to check the current contact details published on the Shinki-Ryu Aiki Budo website and correct them if necessary.

Suggestions / For the Next Meeting:

- The profiles could also be published on the website as a detailed link to each club. Coordination of the technical details with Johannes is still pending.

PK: Presentation of the newly established composition of the commission group

The composition of the commissions was presented after the meeting during the training session. It is as follows:

Examination Board

- Claudia Buder
- Michael Danner
- Henry Kowallik
- Rick Soriano
- Duncan Underwood* (Aikido)

Trainer Commission

- Matthias Becker
- Gunnar Clausen
- Bernd Hubl
- Katrin Reimer
- Birgit Smentek

* Appointed representatives independent of the election

Duncan will continue to chair the commissions as the representative of Nakajima Shihan.

Helmut Theobald* (Shinki Toho) and Danijel Tomasevic* (Daitoryu Aiki Jujutsu) are assigned to the Examination Board as the respective representatives of Shinki Toho and Daitoryu Aiki Jujutsu.

The meetings have been and will continue to be used to discuss all relevant matters.

PK: Report on the Procedure of the Current Election (Johannes Hoffmann)

The procedure used this year—by post/email and on-site—worked well and can be retained for the next election.

- Voted in advance: 21 Pers.
- Voted on-site: 44 Pers.
- Voter turnout: 40% (compared to 25% in the 2020 election. However, at that time all members from 5th Kyu and above were eligible to vote.)

PK: Tasks previously handled by Duncan: setting the agenda and selecting the techniques to be demonstrated. Should this procedure be continued going forward?

Resolution:

- Duncan will continue to select the techniques from the examination curriculum for the PK members

Background / Resolutions from the Discussion:

- All PK members should actively lead a training session during the Dan seminar.
- The focus of the Dan seminar is on the examination techniques for Dan grades. This requires focus and continuity — hence the specification of techniques from a multi-year perspective by Duncan.

PK: Compensation and Travel Reimbursement for Seminars

Resolution:

- The standard is the seminar fee regulation agreed upon in 2015, currently under revision (see appendix to the minutes).
- The fee regulations and compensation tables for the three disciplines — Aikido, Daitoryu Aiki Jujutsu, and Shinki Toho — will be published in Shinki News.

PK: (In addition to the agenda) Handling of Dan Essays

At the time of the meeting, the composition of the new commissions had not yet been finalized. Therefore, no resolution could be passed. The vote within the Examination Board will take place in the coming weeks via email (to be initiated by Duncan).

Miscellaneous:

- The Japan Travel Fund currently contains 3,300 €.

Open Items / For the Next Meeting:

- Information / Question from Georg: Travel cost reimbursement for commission members attending the Dan seminar was originally intended to be covered by the fees collected from the examinations held during the seminar. How should we handle situations where the collected examination fees do not cover the reimbursement amount? This occurred this year, and the deficit was covered by the Heidelberg Club. However, this cannot be assumed as a permanent solution.

Appendix: Seminar Fee Regulations

(excluding Sensei)

There are essentially three different models for collecting seminar fees. As a rule, Model I should be applied. Model III is only to be used in the following cases:

- when the trainer explicitly requests Model III,
- when it is evident in advance that revenues will not cover the costs of Model I,
- when Model I was initially planned, but the income generated is insufficient.

In such cases, Model III becomes the applicable billing model.

Model I – When teaching Aikido only:

1. Dan 20,00€/ 60 Min.
2. Dan 40,00€/ 60 Min.
3. Dan 60,00€/ 60 Min.
4. Dan 80,00€/ 60 Min.
5. Dan 100,00€/ 60 Min.
6. Dan 120,00€/ 60 Min.

In addition, travel costs (€0.30/km) and meal expenses must be covered. Accommodation must also be provided, depending on prior agreement.

Modell II. Mixed Instruction

In cases where multiple disciplines are taught during a seminar, the trainer's compensation should reflect the level of each discipline and their respective time allocations. For example: Aikido: 2 hours, Daitoryu: 2 hours, Shinki Toho: 2 hours. The honorarium is calculated proportionally based on the duration dedicated to each discipline and the trainer's qualification in that specific discipline.

Model III. Individual Agreement

First, the trainer's expenses are fully reimbursed. Subsequently, the organizer's expenses are covered as far as possible. Any remaining amount is then given to the trainer as an honorarium.

Seminar Reports



... for the Last Time?



New Year's Seminar

December 31, 2024 – January 1, 2025, in Schöntal-Oberkessach

Photos: Michael Danner / Text: Claudia Buder



Culture



cultivate
understand
broaden
preserve
connect
value



**To every thing there is a season,
and a time to every purpose under the heaven
(Ecclesiastes 3)**

This verse shines through as Sensei welcomes us on December 31, 2024, to the last New Year's Eve seminar—at least the last of its kind at Shinki Dojo. Oh!

So, how does it feel to do something for the first and the last time? This awareness brings a special attentiveness—the very attentiveness we strive to cultivate through daily practice. sense of melancholy lingers. But perhaps it is like humility, which opens the door to the courage to serve? Courage to face sorrow?

We throw ourselves into practice (...and by the way, on the last day of the year, significantly more Budoka are on the mat than appear in the New Year's photo), We listen to Sensei's words, prepare delicious food and drinks together, sing, experience music, poetry, theater, and exchange thoughts.

As the last hour of the year unfolds, we sit in light and silence. Sensei guides us into stillness with spirit and words.

And then, unmistakably, the new year announces itself. How will it unfold?

By the time we read these lines, the year 2025 will have already outgrown its infancy. And our plans, our resolutions?

Being on the mat early on the first day of the new year feels right. A sense of Hatsumōde, as Sensei describes it.

In the shared practice, the rich cultural diversity of the previous evening still resonates—a gift we carry into the new year.

And Michael Danner, who has experienced every New Year's seminar, poses a question to the group: Are we truly willing to let go of this valuable opportunity for multifaceted learning? Albert Schweitzer put it aptly: "Culture does not fall into our laps like ripe fruit. the tree must be nurtured if it is to bear fruit."

What do we choose? What do we nurture? How do we spend our time?

Let us seek and find the answers together.



Text: Claudia Buder



Photos: Michael Danner

40 Years of Aikido Club Weikersheim e.V

22. February 2025 in Weikersheim

Photos: Klaus Fleischmann and Andreas Ken Lanig / Text: Andreas Ken Lanig



A Seminar Day as an Analogy of a Life with and in Aikido

On Saturday, 22nd February 2025, we gathered at the Old Gymnasium in Weikersheim for a very special seminar – a day dedicated to the 40th anniversary of the Aikido Club Weikersheim.

The day began with shared silence: 30 minutes of meditation, during which we, as a group, found calm and attuned ourselves to what lay ahead. At 10:30 am, Helmut Theobald opened the seminar with a greeting on behalf of Soke Michael Daishiro Nakajima, who, unfortunately, was unable to attend due to illness.

In the following training sessions, where Rick Soriano taught Aikido and Helmut Theobald instructed in Daitoryu, it became clear how even the smallest movement is part of a much larger whole:

For lunch, we went out for pizza, which took quite a while to arrive. This gave us the opportunity for deep discussions and reflection on various thoughts. Looking back on 40 years of Aikido, we do not just see a sequence of training sessions but rather a living mosaic of small, recurring moments. Each of these moments—whether an exchange between experienced and new members or a quiet conversation on the mat—is a meditative object that invites us to contemplate the bigger picture. For us as an Aikido community, what continues to fascinate is the way in which everyday rituals—the mindful changing of clothes, the reverent stepping onto the mat, the respectful bow to our training partner—transform into meditative moments. These small gestures create the framework conditions in which our shared Ki unfolds. For they are more than mere routines; they are an expression of our togetherness and our deep desire to cultivate not only technique but also inner growth through repeated practice. **Just as in a single training session, where each movement builds upon the previous one, our daily interactions reflect the cosmic principle that countless small impulses come together to form a greater whole.**





We experience how Aikido has accompanied and transformed people for 40 years—not just on a technical level, but as a life-affirming meditation. In every breath, every movement, and every shared ritual, the deep connection between body and mind manifests itself. This connection allows us to transcend the boundaries of everyday life. And this boundless togetherness can serve as a reminder that the sum of all small steps creates the true momentum toward something greater—such as 40 years (or more!) of Aikido. This is the essence of harmony, which unites us not only as Aikidoka but also as human beings.

In this spirit, every training session, every meditation hour, and every quiet conversation on the mat is a building block on our shared path, as Aikido continues to shape our lives.

In this sense, even the long wait for our lunch sparked reflections on how these many small steps have formed a long journey—and, hopefully, will continue to do so in the future.

.....



Text: Andreas Ken Lanig



International Shinki Rengo Aikido Dan Seminar

15 and 16 March 2025 in Heidelberg

Text and Photos: Rick Soriano





Once again, Polizeisportverein Heidelberg e.V. hosted the 2025 International Shinki Rengo Aikido Dan Seminar in what was once a multi-purpose entertainment room as part of the former Heidelberg American High School and is now the Polizeisportverein Heidelberg e.V. Budo Dojo (Aikido, Iaido, Jodo, Jujutsu, Karate, Kyudo and Meditation).

On 15 and 16 March, 73 Aikidoka from all over Germany, as well as three Aikidoka from Romania, joined together for an extraordinary weekend of training. The planned number of participants was scheduled to be over 80 people, but 8 had to cancel due to illness, including 3 Aikidoka from Slovenia. Still, the number of participants was the largest so far. Katrin Reimer, Shinkiryu Gruppe Schkeuditz, volunteered as the Key Master and was in charge of our overnight guests on Friday (11) and Saturday (18) nights. Thank you, Katrin.

Nakajima Sensei opened the seminar and led us all in meditation. He highlighted the importance of letting go of one's ego and experiencing each and every moment. Duncan Underwood Sensei, Nakajima Sensei's Deputy, taught the first hour, followed by me and Bernd Hubl Sensei during the second hour.





This year, instead of ordering pizza, Friederike and Lorena organized a “Lunch Lite” in order to facilitate a shortened afternoon break that included the Examination Commission and Training Commission meeting and the Shinki Voting 2025. The best Barista in Heidelberg, Thorsten, brought his high-end coffee machine and delightfully brewed delicious coffee for all who asked. Florin manned the registration desk all by himself due to some of our members being sick on both days. Claus was responsible for the drinks. His experience from past years ensured that we had enough water and juice to keep everyone hydrated throughout the seminar. Special thanks to Markus Krabel Sensei (PSV HD e.V. 1. Vorstand) and Georg Umlauf Sensei (Shinki Dojo Heidelberg Dojo-Cho).

Claudia Buder Sensei and Henry Kowallik Sensei taught for 30 minutes, each, during the afternoon session, followed by Nakajima Sensei for the final hour. Afterwards, Matthias Poetig (Shinkiryu Aikido Grossraeschen e.V.) and Enrico Thise (Shinki Dojo Dresden) successfully tested for Shodan, followed by Bernd Jung (Shinki Dojo Dresden) for Nidan and Ralf Regel (Aikido Dojo Cottbus) for Yondan.

Afterwards, we went to dinner at Kirchheimer Loch Greek Restaurant and enjoyed reconnecting with each other.

The next morning, Nakajima Sensei led us in meditation and two hours of intensive training. Thank you, Sensei!



Thanks to those who helped with tables, benches, and two rows of mats, as well as our Dojo members and those who stayed in the Dojo and also helped sweep and clean. We are really lucky to have a Dojo where most of the mats remain on the floor throughout the year, as well as a large Dojo that can accommodate so many people, including those staying overnight.

Thanks to everyone who attended. We are glad that everyone made it home safely. For those of you who missed out, have no fear, do mark your calendars and plan to come to lovely Heidelberg next year, when we host the 2026 International Shinki Rengo Aikido Dan Seminar.



Text and Photos: Rick Soriano

Promotions

2 December 2024 – 9 March 2025

Aikido

10th Kyu	Fröde (Tietze), Karl	Königstein
9th Kyu	Frings, Liah	Rheinbreitbach
9th Kyu	Zeidan, Moustafa	Leopoldshafen-JG
9th Kyu	Mates Cardoso Rêgo, Davi Ricardo	Leopoldshafen-JG
9th Kyu	Li, Marco Huofei	Leopoldshafen-JG
5th Kyu	Nägele, Walter	Heidelberg
5th Kyu	Pürkner, Christian	München
5th Kyu	Strobel, Marion	München
5th Kyu	Ghosh, Sagnik	Karlsruhe KIT
4th Kyu	Malec, Aljaz	Maribor
3rd Kyu	Wohlleber, Sophia	Oberkessach
2nd Kyu	Lindenbach, Yves	Oberkessach
1st Kyu	Ritter, Ulf	Heidelberg
1st Kyu	Lang, Nathalie	Weimar
1st Kyu	Oreski, Slavko	Maribor
1st Dan	Kiefer, Christian	Heidelberg
2nd Dan	Mensch, Friederike	Heidelberg
4th Dan	Kowallik, Gudrun	Dresden
5th Dan	Trzaski, Marius	Oberkessach
5th Dan	Clausen, Gunnar	Oldenswort
5th Dan	Smentek, Birgit	München
6th Dan	Haaß, Matthias	Oberkessach
6th Dan	Tomasevic, Danijel	Edingen
6th Dan	Danner, Michael	Karlsruhe
6th Dan	Soriano, Rick	Heidelberg

Daitoryu Aiki Jujutsu

4th Kyu	Gayer, Horst	Pforzheim
5th Dan	Becker, Matthias	München

Seminars

2025

Seminars 2025

- | | | | |
|------------------------|--|------------------------------|---|
| Sat, 3 – Sun, 4 May | Weimar: Aiki Budo Seminar
with Duncan Underwood and Danijel Tomašević | Mon, 28 July – Sat, 2 August | Oldenswort: Eiderstedter Aiki-Budo-Summer Seminar
with Duncan Underwood |
| Sat 10 – Sun 11 May | Schkeuditz: Shinki-Toho Seminar
with Helmut Theobald | Thu, 14 – Sun, 17 August | Edingen: Shinkiryu Summer-Seminar
with M. D. Nakajima Soke |
| 24 May - 1 June | Donauschlinge: Aikido Seminar
with Petra and Bernd Hubl | Sat, 27 – Sun, 28 September | Königheim: Ittoden Shinki Toho Seminar
with M. D. Nakajima Soke
and Helmut Theobald Menkyokaiden |
| Thu, 5 – Sat, 7 June | in and around Muroan:
Bokuyokan Honbu 50 years anniversary,
Seminar and Celebration | Sat, 18 – Sun, 19 October | Leopoldshafen: Aikido/Daitoryu Seminar
with M. D. Nakajima Shihan |
| Thu, 12 – Tue, 17 June | Sibiu, România: Shinki Ryu Aiki Budo
with Arkadiusz Paluszek | Sat, 8 – Sun, 9 November | Dresden: Shinkiryu Aiki Budo Seminar
with M. D. Nakajima Soke |
| Sat, 5 – Sun, 6 July | Munich: Aiki Budo Seminar
with M. Daishiro Nakajima Soke | Sat, 15 – Sun, 16 November | Ulm: Aikido/Daitoryu Seminar
with M. D. Nakajima Shihan |

Arigato gozaimasu

Preview Shinki News No. 40

The next edition of Shinki News will be published in June 2025.

If you would like to contribute to Shinki News, please submit your contribution(s) to: shinkinews@shinkiryu.de and we will contact you to discuss the formalities.

Enjoy the spring!
Shinki News Team.

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