

The Shinin Debate

There is an article on the internet that purports to describe the meanings of Shinin and Shinyo as used by Master Okazaki. There is no support for these conclusions, only the opinion of the author, Thomas Jenkins (TJ). TJ even says that Shi Nin is a Buddhist teaching without providing one source showing where and in what context this term was used.

TJ states in his article that he was told Dead Man = Shinin. Professor Estes denied Master Okazaki ever said or taught such a thing. It was not 1964 but in the late 1960s. I was there.

My instructor, Professor Kitty Smith and family had moved to Chico to learn Judo from Professor Estes. This meant they had to find work, a place to live, schools for their children and begin over. This was the commitment they made to learn from Professor Estes.

After settling down in Chico, I called and was invited to visit. There was a couch or a floor depending on the number of children present. I went to Chico after graduating in 1966. It was during the week since I was not yet working. After I arrived, Kitty called Professor and asked if she could bring me to his class. He agreed and Kitty drove me. After the class, Kitty asked for me to wait while she spoke with Professor. She then called for me and introduced me to my new instructor – Professor Estes. He had agreed to accept me as his student. Any questions I had I was not to ask or seek from Professor Kitty Smith. Professor Estes was now my instructor and I was to seek instruction only from him. I could train where I was able, but I was to seek my instruction only from him.

During this period, I went to Chico every couple of weeks, usually during the week as I participated in the regular classes. One night there were several black belt holders who showed up, five in all. They were Vine Wheelock, Norman Cole, “Little” Chuck Smith, Tom Jenkins and Gene Edwards. This was the first and only time I met the first two and the first time I had met the other three. Of course Professor Fisher was there. After class Professor Estes asked all his black belt holders to stay for a special class. There were the five senior students and myself, six in all.

“Little” Chuck Smith was just beginning his family and said he needed to go home. Professor Estes was adamant he stay for the Introduction and the first few arts. Finally, Professor told his Sandan that if he refused the request, he would no longer be welcome on Professor's mat! Hearing this, I knew this was a Special Class and one I should pay attention to, for this Special Class was to introduce me to the Black Belt Arts of Kodenkan.

I have included this special instruction on this site (see [Introduction to Shinin no Maki](#)). “Little” Chuck Smith was my partner until he left. Then I worked with Gene Edwards. We covered the entire list and class did not end until around 11:00 pm. All had left except Professors Estes and Fisher and TJ. As Kitty had dropped me off, I had no ride. Professor Fisher said we could go to his place until I got my ride. As it was late we had to be very quiet and the living room lamp was on the low setting. Prof. Fisher and TJ were in the kitchen with dictionaries looking up words to ask Professor who was in the arm chair in the living room. In order to be quiet, I was speaking with him while kneeling at his side. So TJ would come and ask if this meaning sounded right or that meaning, because we had just received the Formal Teaching of Shin In no Maki and they were trying to discover the meaning.

So I was chatting with Professor and asked him about Shin Jin. Professor's answer was clear and forceful “*Shinjin means Spirit Man. A Spirit Man is a Great Man. This is what Professor Okazaki called it. To that, there is no question.*” He then explained what a Spirit Man was and I have detailed this teaching in my Treatise under that topic.

Finally, TJ came and asked if Shinin meant “Dead Man”. Professor shook his head and said no. That meaning was against everything that Master Okazaki taught. It was against the life Master Okazaki stood for. That should have ended it. It did not.

What TJ and Lamar missed was this: “*Now, when one practices Shin In, one should try to blend harmoniously with one's partner. As smoke is captured by a breeze and becomes part of the breeze, so too is one's practice supposed to be with one's partner. As a ball turns smoothly because it is round, so too must one turn with one's partner. One must become one with one's partner so that there is neither Tori nor Uke, there are only two individuals who have come together so smoothly that one cannot distinguish one from the other. This, then, is the purpose of the practice of Shin In No Maki.*”

This is the meaning of Shin In. One dictionary defines Shinin as “Artistic Excellence”. The above quote is much clearer in defining artistic excellence than just the two words.

So on that special night, where I was first taught the Shinin no Maki arts by Professor Estes and those present were taught the Oral Instruction as taught by Master Okazaki, some apparently did not listen and did not learn.

The Esoteric Principles say “*Like a drawing in Sumi-e of the Whispering of the Wind in the Pines (Shinin), the secrets of Judo can only be suggested.*”

In Master Okazaki's 1925 diploma he writes,

Haiku:	Poem:
Yuki No Ue Ni Furitsumu	Listen for the sound
Yuki No Oto O Kiki	of falling snow;
Hito Oto Karareba	If you can do that,
Min To Shizumake	try to see it.”

Once again we have the intangible of something beautiful, something mysterious. This is Ki In. And if a person becomes one with their partner it is Shin In!

Karlfried Graf Dürckheim wrote *The Japanese cult of tranquility*. He apparently was greatly influenced by Nietzsche's thoughts on Nihilism and translates and interprets Zen in a singular manner – the death of one's ego. This is where the Shi Nin (dead man) idea originated. This book was shown to Professor Estes and phrases were read and then he was asked if that was not what Master Okazaki taught. No was the answer.

How many times No? I do not know.

How can a student call someone their teacher if they challenge the teacher repeatedly even though the answer never changed? Eventually, one has to conclude the questioner is an antagonist and not a student and take the appropriate steps.

I will not continue this story though there are additional episodes.

Professor Estes taught many students. Many students disappointed him. I promised him I would not do that. What I have presented is what Professor Estes taught. Moreover, I have repeated what he said. These are his words. I have then shown how what he taught is consistent with Oriental thought and culture by using actual published sources.

I wish to add that none of the students or disciples of Kodenkan ever said Shi Nin. Not one. Not Professors Estes, Law, Cahill, Kufferath, Montero, Muran or Bernard Baptiste (Seaside/Monterey, Ca.). TJ is the only one in the world who has heard this. TJ is the only person who has taken this special hearing ability and written a document on it.

It remains Shin In (Spirit Rhythm) – the 1st Canon of Painting.

As I wrote at the top of my treatise – Read and Decide.