

Commemorating Master Tanaka Shigeho, the late honorary director of the Shiseikan

Master Tanaka was a great Budo Master and a great personality.
He gave us so much, both his students in Japan and his students overseas.
He will be missed dearly. I hear that Budoka in dojos all over the world are in mourning.

He changed the lives of so many people, whom he brought together and touched with Budo.
He also changed my own life forever.
He was the first Budo Master I ever met.
That was about 20 years ago when I entered Todai Aikidobu.
Meeting him was an unforgettable experience.
The impression of that day is engraved in my heart.

He gave me Kanji for my name (Ateji).
He sent me cards and letters almost every year, even in these recent years despite his age.
He had a great impact on me and my path studying Shiseikan Budo, Budo spirit, Shinto, Japanese language and culture.

During altogether more than 5 of those 20 years, I was allowed to attend his lessons in Japan (at Todai and at the Shiseikan) and to interpret for him when foreign visitors came.
When he came to Europe (including Germany, Poland, England), I was allowed to accompany him everywhere and interpret for him.
It was a great honour.

He left a lasting impression all over the world.
His photo is seen on some dojo walls in far-away countries.
It reminds us of his great spirit.
He fostered the international relations in Budo.
As the first director of the Shiseikan, he was not only essential in the founding of the Shiseikan but also in the development and nurturing of international relations on all levels: his personal one-to-one level as he had many overseas friends and students, the Shiseikan level as he laid the foundation of the Shiseikan's international contacts, and the international journeys and exchange activities involving university Aikido clubs.
He transcended borders and cultures.
He always taught generously, including us Non-Japanese students.
He treated us with equal respect.

He taught many hundreds of overseas students, possibly thousands.
Many of them later became dojo leaders themselves.
Many reinforced the connection to the Shiseikan, some also the connections to university clubs.
His spirit and his teachings live on in us and among us.
I will do my best to pass on his spirit and his teachings.

My heart is with the Tanaka family, with the Shiseikan's director, teachers, staff and students, with the university clubs and with everyone who knew Master Tanaka.
Please receive my deepest sympathies and sincere condolences in these difficult times.

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