

The following story of Dr. Usui appears on his Memorial Stone.

Translation of Usui Memorial



Translation of the Usui Memorial at Saihoji Temple, Tokyo Japan

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Since a friend in Japan sent us pictures of the Usui memorial in the spring of 1996, we had been wanting to put this web page up. Many other projects got in the way, and we didn't get a good close-up of the monument until our friend Shiya Fleming brought back some good photos in July 1997. Emiko and I spent several days going through the old dictionaries she had, and I was very happy at the end to compensate her with Reiki Mastership training for her part in the process. Finally, I felt we had completed

enough to present this to others.

This is a fairly literal translation of the Usui memorial, as we wanted you, the reader, to get as close a rendition to plain English as possible, without any paraphrasing. This allows you to decide how you would rephrase sentences and paragraphs.

All comments in (brackets) are either our translations of previous kanji (in quotations), or our explanation of previous words. Please note: there are no periods or paragraphs on the original, so we have added these in to make it easier to read. Also, as in all translations, we had several choices of words for each kanji, and tried to pick what we felt best, depending on the content. Our

thanks to Melissa Riggall and Miyuki Arasawa for their corrections offered, and to later translations shared with me.

Although this location does contain the remains of Usui Sensei's wife – Sadako; son – Fuji; and daughter – Toshiko, it only has a part of Sensei's remains. The Saihoji site was set up 11 months after Sensei's death and is not his original resting place. In fact, Sensei's living students (there are several) say he was a Tendai Buddhist all his life, while the Saihoji temple is a Jodo Shyu (Pure Land) Buddhist temple. There is a small private shrine elsewhere in Tokyo - donated by an Usui doka (student) - that holds the original remains, as well as the original Usui Concepts or Affirmations (Precepts) on a wall hanging, and the original large photo portrait of Sensei taken by Dr. Hayashi (who was an amateur photographer).

Please share this information with all, but we ask you to leave this introduction portion and copyright with it. For pictures and location of the memorial, please visit my Saihoji Temple pages.

(I would like to express my gratitude to all those who have offered changes and corrections to the translation)

Translation



"Reihou Chouso Usui Sensei Kudoko No Hi" Memorial of Reiki Founder Usui Sensei's Benevolence

(The kanji at the top of the memorial reads, from right to left: "Reihou" - spiritual method, Reiki method; "Chouso" - founder; "Usui"; "Sensei" - teacher; "Kudoko" - benevolence, a various (pious) deed; "no Hi" - of memorial, a tombstone, a monument - this is also what the first line in the main text says).

It is called 'toku' that people experience by culture and training, and 'koh' that people practice teaching and the way to save people. ('koh' + 'toku' = 'kudoku'; Koh = distinguished service, honor, credit, achievement; Toku = a virtue, morality)

Only the person who has high virtue and does good deeds can be called a great founder and leader. From ancient times, among wisemen, philosophers, geniuses and (a phrase that means - very straight and having the right kind of integrity), the founders of a new teaching or new religion are like that. We could say that Usui Sensei was one of them.

Usui "Sensei" (literally "he who comes before", thus teacher, or respected person) newly started the method that would change mind and body for better by using universal power. People hearing of his reputation and wanting to learn the method, or who wanted to have the therapy, gathered around from all over. It was truly prosperous. (by "therapy" is meant the Usui Ryoho - Usui ancestral remedy - of his Usui-Do teachings, including the 5 principles.)

Sensei's common name is Mikao and other name was Gyoho (perhaps his spiritual name). He was born in the Taniai-mura (village) in the Yamagata district of Gifu prefecture (Taniai is now part of Miyama Village). His ancestor's name is Tsunetane Chiba. (a very famous Samurai who had played an active part as a military commander between the end of Heian Period and the beginning of Kamakura Period (1180-1230) However Hirsohi Doi revealed at URRI 2000 that Tsunetane was a son of Tsuneshige, who was 1st son of Tsunekane, and that Usui Sensei is descended from Tsuneyasu, the 3rd son of Tsunekane.) His father's name was Uzaemon (this was his popular name; his given name was Taneuji). His mother's maiden name was Kawai.

Sensei was born in the first year of the Keio period, called Keio Gunnen (1865), on August 15th. From what is known, he was a talented and hard working student. His ability was far superior. After he grew up, he traveled to Europe, America and China to study (yes, it actually says that!). He wanted to be a success in life, but couldn't achieve it; often he was unlucky and in need. But he didn't give up and he disciplined himself to study more and more.

One day he went to Kuramayama to start an asceticism. (it says "shyu gyō" - a very strict process of spiritual training using meditation and fasting.) On the beginning of the 21st day, suddenly he felt one large Reiki over his head

and he comprehended the truth. At that moment he got Reiki "Ryoho" (This term originally meant ancestral remedy or therapy.)

When he first tried this on himself, then tried this on his family, good results manifested instantly. Sensei said that it is much better to share this pleasure with the public at large than to keep this knowledge to our family. (it was customary to keep such knowledge in the family to increase their power) In April of the 11th year of the Taisho period (1922) he moved his residence to Harajuku, Aoyama, Tokyo. (this is next to the Meiji Outer Gardens and the huge Aoyama Cemetery.) There he founded "Gakkai." (a learning society) He taught Reiki Ryoho. (According to his student Tenon-in, who in 2003 is 106, Sensei was teaching his spiritual method simply called "his method," referred to by his students as "Usui-Do." It was based upon the concepts he wrote called Usui Reiki Ryoho.) People came from far and near and asked for the guidance and therapy, and many shoes lined up outside of the building. (In Japan you take your shoes off at the door.)

In September of the twelfth year of the Taisho period (1923), there were many injured and sick people all over Tokyo because of the Kanto earthquake and fire. Sensei felt deep anxiety. Everyday he went around in the city to treat them. We could not count how many people were treated and saved by him. During this emergency situation, his relief activity was that of reaching out his hands of love to suffering people. His relief activity was generally like that. (Mr. Hiroshi Doi was told that Sensei would actually lay on the ground and give Reiki from his hands and feet to at least 4 people at a time.)

After that, his learning place became too small. In February of the 14th year of the Taisho period (1925), he built and moved to a new one (a dojo or training hall) outside Tokyo in Nakano. (Nakano is now part of Tokyo.) Because his fame had risen still more, he was invited to many places in Japan, often. In answering those requests, he went to Kure, then to Hiroshima, to Saga and reached Fukuyama. (Fukuyama was also the location of Sensei's creditors - his final trip was mainly to meet with them) It was during his stay in Fukuyama that he unexpectedly got sick and died. He was 62 years old. (In Western terms, Sensei was 60 - born August 15, 1865; died March 9, 1926 as per his grave marker; however, in old Japan, you are "1" when born and turn another year older at the start of the new year.)

His wife was from Suzuki family; her name was Sadako. They had a son and a daughter. The son's name was Fuji who carried on the Usui family (meaning the property, business, family name, etc. Born in 1908 or 1909, at the time of his father's death Fuji was 19 in Japanese years. We learned that Fuji may have taught Reiki in Taniai village. According to the Usui family grave stone, the daughter's name was Toshiko, and she died in September 23, 1935 at the age of 22 in Japanese years. Sensei also taught his wife's niece who was a Tendai Buddhist Nun. As of this writing (2003) she is still alive - approximately 108)

Sensei was very mild, gentle and humble by nature. He was physically big and strong yet he kept smiling all the time. However, when something happened, he prepared towards a solution with firmness and patience. He had many talents. He liked to read, and his knowledge was very deep of history, biographies, medicine, theological books like Buddhism Kyoten (Buddhist bible) and bibles (scriptures), psychology, jinsen no jitsu (god hermit technique), the science of direction, ju jitsu (he also learned Judo from Jigoro Kano, according to Tenon-in), incantations (the "spiritual way of removing sickness and evil from the body"), the science of divination, physiognomy (face reading) and the I Ching. I think that Sensei's training in these, and the culture which was based on this knowledge and experience, led to the key to perceiving Reiho. (short for "Reiki Ryoho") Everybody would agree with me. (The origins of the Usui-Do system are now known to be from Taoism and Shinto brought to Japan from China, probably around the 5th century.)

Looking back, the main purpose of Reiho was not only to heal diseases, but also to have right mind and healthy body so that people would enjoy and experience happiness in life. Therefore when it comes to teaching, first let the student understand well the Meiji Emperor's admonitory, then in the morning and in the evening let them chant and have in mind the five precepts which are:

First we say, today don't get angry.

Secondly we say, don't worry.

Third we say, be thankful.

Fourth we say, endeavor your work.

Fifth we say, be kind to people.

(My friend Emiko Arai was very firm about the above wording.)

This is truly a very important admonitory. This is the same way wisemen and saints disciplined themselves since ancient times. Sensei named these the "secret methods of inviting happiness", "the spiritual medicine of many diseases" to clarify his purpose to teach. Moreover, his intention was that a teaching method should be as simple as possible and not difficult to understand. Every morning and every evening, sit still in silence with your hands in prayer (gassho) and chant the affirmations, then a pure and healthy mind would be nurtured. It was the true meaning of this to practice this in daily life, using it. (i.e. put it into practical use) This is the reason why Reiho became so popular. (see the my document on the Usui Precepts for more on this.)

Recently the world condition has been in transition. There is not little change in people's thought. (i.e. it's changing a lot) Fortunately, if Reiho can be spread throughout the world, it must not be a little help (i.e. it's a big help) for people who have a confused mind or who do not have morality. Surely Reiho is not only for healing chronic diseases and bad habits.

The number of the students of Sensei's teaching reaches over 2,000 people already. (This number may also include the students' students) Among them senior students who remained in Tokyo are carrying on Sensei's learning place and the others in different provinces also are trying to spread Reiki as much as possible. (Dr. Hayashi took title to the dojo in November, 1926 and together with Admiral Taketomi and Admiral Ushida, re-located it to his clinic in Shinano Machi in 1926, and ran it as a hospice.) Although Sensei died, Reiho has to be spread and to be known by many people in the long future. Aha! What a great thing that Sensei has done to have shared this Reiho, which he perceived himself, to the people unsparingly.

Now many students converged at this time and decided to build this memorial at Saihoji Temple in the Toyotama district (local boundaries have changed and the Saihoji temple has been in Nakano district (1986) and is now in Suginami district) to make clear his benevolence and to spread Reiho to the people in the future. I was asked to write these words. Because I deeply appreciate his work and also I was moved by those thinking to be honored to be a student of Sensei, I accepted this work instead of refusing to do so. I would sincerely hope that people would not forget looking up to Usui Sensei with respect. (The location of the burial plot and memorial may have been the work of the Admirals and the URR Gakkai. Usui Sensei was confirmed by his living students Tenon-in and Suzuki-sensei to have been a devout Tendai until his death. Yet the Saihoi temple is a Pure Land sect or Jodo Shu Buddhist temple.)

Edited by "ju-san-i" ("subordinate third rank, the Junior Third Court (Rank) -- an honorary title), Doctor of Literature, Masayuki Okada.

Written (brush strokes) by Navy Rear Admiral, "ju-san-i kun-san-tou ko-yon-kyu" ("subordinate third rank, the Junior Third Court (Rank), 3rd order of merit, 4th class of service" -- again, an honorary title) Juzaburo Ushida. (also pronounced Gyuda)

Second Year of Showa (1927), February