

The story of THE KODOKAN BADGE

Senta Yamada 6th Dan

The shape of the Kodokan badge is called YATA-NO-KAGAMI, which is the name of a type of Japanese mirror. It is not as commonly thought a cherry blossom.

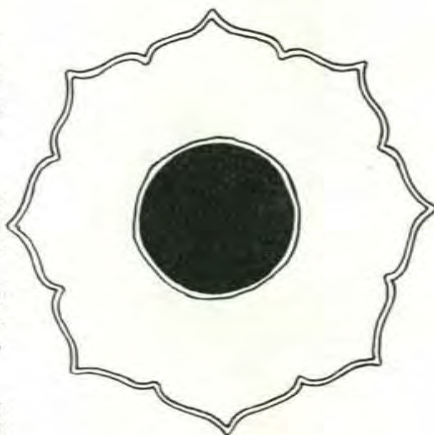
Dr. Jigoro Kano designed this as the badge of the Kodokan and placed in the middle a red spot which represented the sun.

YATA has two meanings: (1) Eight sided, (2) Immeasurable, being of great height, depth, width, etc.

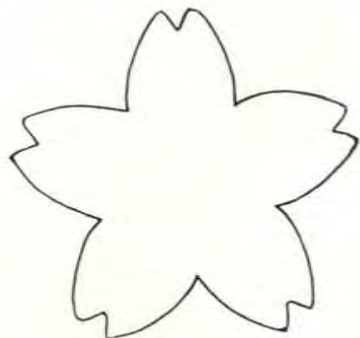
The colour of YATA-NO-KAGAMI is white to represent purity, and the centre is red to represent the sun, which is the centre of our solar system, round which we revolve and on which we depend for our life. In Japan many years ago the sun was thought to be the face of God and thus the truth.

The history of the YATA-NO-KAGAMI is as old as Japan herself, and has been the symbol of the Emperors majesty.

The Kojiki, the most ancient chronicle of Japan says this about the YATA-NO-KAGAMI. In the beginning there was God, called Ameno-minaka Nushino-mikoto, after the beginning there were two more Gods, these were called the three



THE KODOKAN BADGE



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creators of the great universe. Subsequently there came Seven Gods after which the world was perfected including men, animals, plants, everything.

Amaterasu-omikami, who is to Japanese mythology, what Zeus is to the Greek mythology, came to earth to supervise that which had been created, and gave the earth to the son of God, Ninigi-nomikoto, he also gave him his YATA-NO-KAGAMI. At the time of giving him these things he instructed him, that he and his children should watch over the earth so that all would be well with it. That the YATA-NO-KAGAMI was to be passed to his children as a symbol of their divinity.

This is believed to have been done until the present day when the YATA-NO-KAGAMI is supposed to be enshrined in the Temple at Ese.

The YATA-NO-KAGAMI is represented in Shinto temples by an eight-sided mirror which is prayed to as a symbol of God. Shindoka believe that a mirror reflects our outwards selves and that another mirror is needed to reflect our inner minds. The YATA-NO-KAGAMI does this.

Dr. Kano founded the judo system by studying the old Jujitsu arts and by expounding the tenet that we might improve our minds and bodies by physical effort. Judo, he said, is the most efficient way to use the body and mind to perfect ourselves so that we may become more useful beings of this world. From this it can be seen that he meant that judo should be used for self-improvement and not just as a method of achieving physical superiority.

He gave us contest and examinations so that we might be encouraged to greater effort and not that they might become an end in themselves. Nowadays, contests and examinations are given more and more importance, but we should not make these our sole objective. If as the Shintoist looks to the YATA-NO-KAGAMI the judoka looked to Dr. Kano's teachings, his judo and daily life would draw nearer to perfection. In Japan a sho-dan is considered a mere tyro, and he knows that he is just beginning. Sometimes in this country even Kyu grades are considered teachers, and although they are good teachers, we should remember that they and we, are not past learning.

European Judo Championships

Special Notice. Readers who are contemplating going to Geneva for the European Judo Championships in May of this year, are advised to contact Cooks, the official travel agents for the B.J.A. as soon as possible as accommodation in Geneva is very difficult to find at this time of the year.