



SHINTAIDO OF AMERICA

JAN 1987 NEWSLETTER

NEW ENGLAND

NEW BLOOD ON THOMPSON ISLAND: A POST-SHINTAIDO TEN VISIT TO THE EAST COAST

Two months after Shintaido Ten, I visited the East Coast on business, and I was able to attend the Thompson Island Gasshuku. I was glad to meet many friends and to have keiko together with them. I really appreciated all the kindness and hospitality of the East Coast members of Shintaido of America.

This was my fourth visit to Shintaido of America. On each visit, I have been able to see a steady step forward for Shintaido of America. This time, I was especially impressed with something new in the gasshuku atmosphere. I think it was not only because there were four new instructors, but also because each member was getting to realize his or her responsibility in the circle and trying to take action toward a new era. I could feel that kind of initiative among the core members.

While I was watching keiko with Michael, I thought of a few points about gorei. I would like to share them, since most of the members have started to give gorei for the main keiko as well as for jumbi.

First, I would like to quote from Hokari-sensei's comments, which he gave assistants eight years ago. At that time, I was an assistant, and we started to give gorei for jumbi keiko in turn. One day, Hokari-sensei said to us, "When you give gorei, first of all you have to watch the participants' conditions carefully so you can give appropriate gorei to them according to their bodies' conditions and movements. Less experienced goreisha (those who give gorei) can't afford to do this, and they want to express their personal ideas. As a result, their gorei is likely to become only "wishful gorei." I think this comment is really true, even after eight years. It must be good for us to keep it in mind.

Second, I thought of the importance of *ma* (the pause) during *gorei*. If we can use *ma* in *gorei* effectively, we can promote the practitioners' concentration and deepen their breathing. But less experienced *goreisha* are likely to be uncomfortable with this pause, because sometimes they lose the concentration of the practitioners and even their own confidence.

"...*ma* is a sort of spice of *gorei*."

I think American *goreisha* are generally more uncomfortable with *ma* than Japanese *goreisha*, which I suppose is related to cultural background. In Japanese culture, we think of *ma* as a pause by which we can express many meanings. In Western cultures, people are better at making some visible or audible expression, rather than inscrutable silence. So, *ma* is a sort of spice of *gorei*. If you can use it correctly, you can make the best food.

One cannot understand the difficulty of *gorei* and the *goreisha*'s suffering, effort, and solitude until he or she has given *gorei*. We can't feel the leader's agony until we take the leader's position. Probably now Michael feels Fugaku (Ito)-sensei's effort to bring up instructors, and new instructors are tackling *gorei*, while assistants and other members also face their new tasks.

All of us are in the same process of *keiko*, which literally means to re-experience our predecessor's way. In this way, we can go forward in and with the new organization.

So, I am looking forward to see the next step forward for Shintaido of America.

-- Atsushi Funakawa



DEEP WITHIN WE ALL CAN SWIM
IN THE MAZE OF WHIM WE ALL
CAN SWIM

IN DARK OF LIGHT WE WILL
FIGHT
FIGHT THE WHIM OR SWIM
CLOUDS OF LAUGHTER
PAIN AND GAIN
FIGHT OR SWIM FIGHT OR SWIM

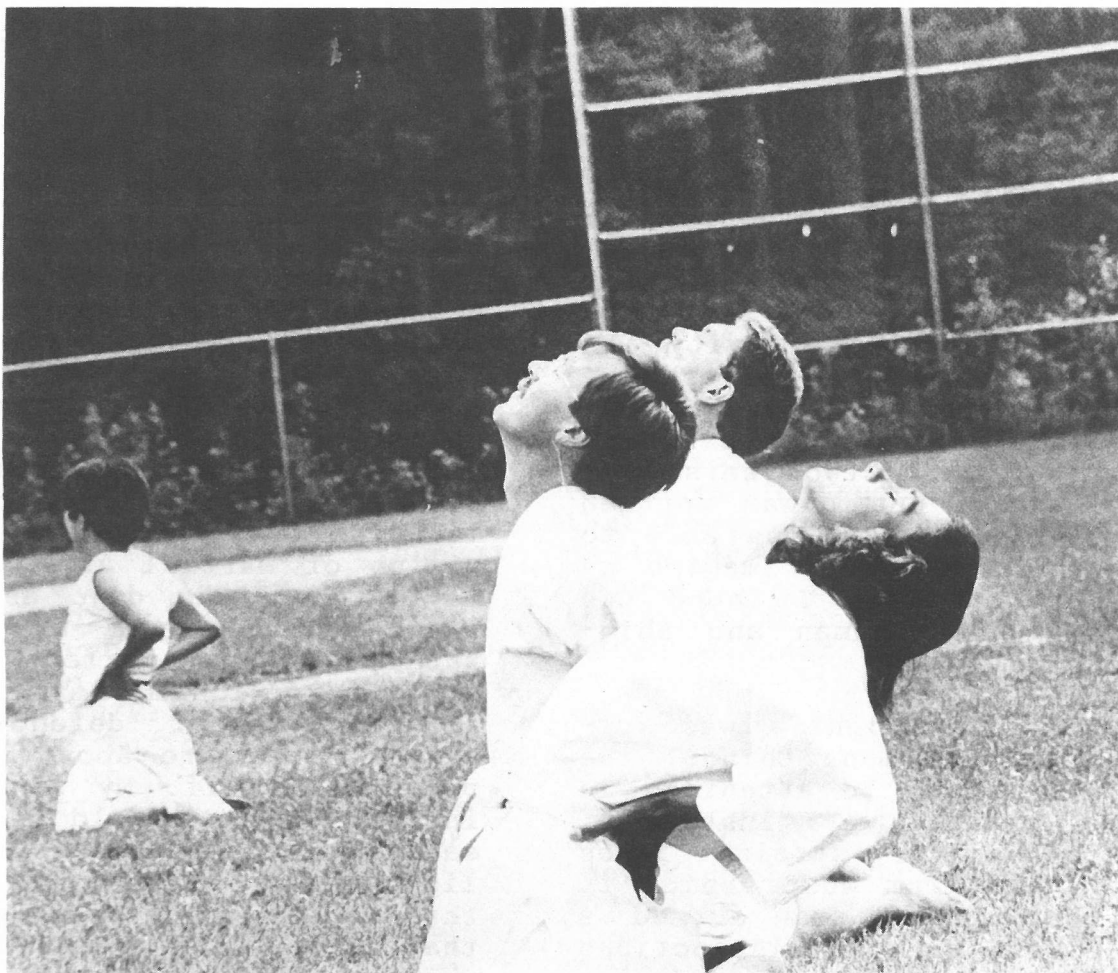
A BOILING BOWL OF POWER
SINGS WITHIN

IT RISES IN A WAVE
BRINGING PAIN FEAR
FREEDOM
EXPLORE! IT SAYS
LEARN! IT SAYS
DIE! IT SAYS

I CANNOT LET GO

THE LIGHT FADES
THIS TOO I LOSE
THIS TOO MUST DIE
WHEN I AM DEAD
I WILL START AGAIN

--Jennie Day



IN MEMORIUM

It is so hard to find words to convey the feelings, emotions, and realizations brought on by the sudden and unexpected death of a dear friend: Russ Staples. Life comes with only one guarantee: that one day death will call us.

I feel extremely fortunate that Russ's path crossed mine if only for a brief time. Right from the first meeting at keiko, Russ's love of life, openness and a eagerness to experience all that is out there was as evident as his slick sweat-soaked wrists he offered when doing back stretch or kumite. Being the winner of every wet gi contest won him the title of "slime monster" by some of our group -- sweat he had plenty but never a monster.

Russ's positive attitude, sensitivity to others, an almost uncanny ability to grasp new material and an almost constant heart-warming smile gained him an unmistakable place in Shintaido keiko and in all the lives that he touched.

I miss Russ very much and feel a sadness and unfairness at death's choice to call him so soon. Russ's body is dead but through all who knew and loved him his spirit lives.

Thank you Russ.

-- Joe Zawielski

A BEGINNER'S PERSPECTIVE

A few months ago I moved from a fairly large city in Washington to a small town in eastern Oregon. Knowing that I would need some type of physical activity to help center and refresh me, I decided to try to continue Karate practice which I had begun two years previously. But I was worried that I wouldn't be able to find a teacher. Imagine my surprise when I found Lee and John Seaman and Shintaido!

The first night I was surprised by many things. The class came to attention in an unusual way: instead of the military straight lines ranked from most senior to most junior, we formed a circle with no distinctions based on "time in grade" or level of expertise. The attention of the class was focused on "quiet mind," not on an excellence-in-battle presentation by the sensei. The teacher expressed a strange point of view: that as a beginner I had something to offer to others in the class. I couldn't understand this because I believed that having perfect technique as an example was the only thing of value to offer others.

And then there was the laughter -- very silly, I thought. It must be an unusual circumstance for people to be having so much fun practicing and working together. Surely they will become serious soon. Undoubtedly they are humoring

me in my middle-aged clumsiness about the spirit in which a movement is being done being more central than the technique. But even though it was odd and unexpected, something drew me back.

Something continues to draw me back. Each week there is at least one more surprise. Little by little I am relinquishing my Marine Corps vision of martial arts and moving into the dojo as a place to discover myself rather than to perfect my technique. I am learning something about defending myself, but more about expressing myself. My sensei insists in manifold ways each week that openness and lightness are better allies than guarded strategies; that sensitivity and compassion can do as much to disarm an opponent as intimidation: that I am safe enough to stumble as I reach out beyond where I am.

It is a love relationship that brings me back each week. I move with, against, and through pain and limitation to seek peace. Shintaido provides me with information and inspiration to find the qualities I seek -- in the dojo and everywhere. It's more than I thought possible. Imagine my surprise!

-- Judy Lewis



GROUP REPORTS

BAY AREA SHINTAIDO, instructed by Jim Sterling assisted by Ben Schireson, currently consists of 9 children and 8 adults and is located at 66 Sanchez st. S.F. Upcoming events include the annual Cherry Blossom Festival Demonstration in Japan town, co-organization of May Gasshuku w. Berkeley group, and joint classes w. Berkeley group under the direction of Ito-sensei (see article). Schedule: children Tu/Fri afternoons; adults Tu/Th eves, Sat. a.m. at Ocean Beach. Contact: Jim Sterling/244 Glenview/SF, CA 94131/(415) 821-2611.

BERKELEY SHINTAIDO GROUP, w. about 10 students, makes no small talk. Classes are Sat. 9:30 am at the University YWCA. Contact: Bela Breslau (415) 731-9364.

BLUE MOUNTAIN SHINTAIDO is a widely scattered group centered presently in La Grande, Oregon. We have about 10 students practicing regularly with us in La Grande; others who live too far away practice on their own and come when they can. Regular practices are taught by John and Lee Seaman Tu 7-9 pm and W 5-7 pm, with occasional weekend practices.

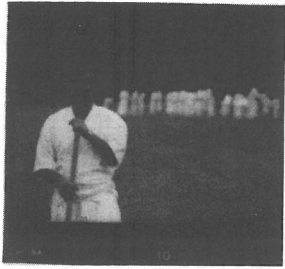
Contact: Jen Day/1096 N. First st./Union, OR 97883.

CAMBRIDGE SHINTAIDO continues, instructed by Bill Burtis until Michelle can't see her toes. Weds. 6:00 pm and Shintaido of New

England keiko taught by M.Thompson Sun 9:00 am. Contact Brenda Miller (617) 324- 5939.

SHINTAIDO NEW HAMPSHIRE continues to grow (as does the instructor Michelle Grenier). Michelle's husband Bill Burtis has generously volunteered his services as instructor during that time when Michelle can no longer see her toes. In December we hosted a prov. instructors and assistants workshop under the guidance of Michael "Tonton" Thompson who shared his magic the following day with many Shintaido of New England members. Classes: M/Th eves Newmarket Town Hall. Contact Michelle Grenier (603) 659-3254.

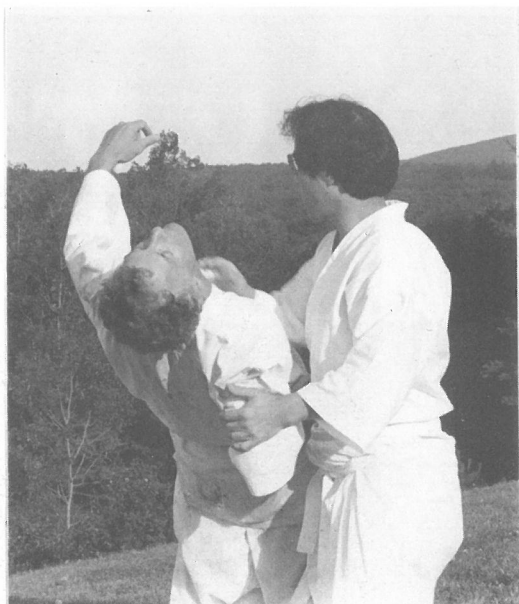
SHINTAIDO OF WEST L.A. is officially one year old this January and has tripled in size from its start. All the Europeans have joined us here (the group is 90% French with one Swiss and one German) for a completely international feeling. This past November we sponsored our first Thanksgiving weekend workshop with Ito-sensei giving gorei (see article). By press time we will have hosted our first kangeiko in L.A. with Michael Thompson-sensei on the beach in Santa Monica. Our 1987 schedule will include a Thanksgiving Gasshuku in the L.A. area. Classes are: Shintaido Tu 7-9 pm, Boh Th 7-9 pm, and alternate Boh/Shintaido Sat 4-6 pm. Contact: Lori Breant/2411 2nd st./Santa Monica CA 90405/(213) 450-4577.

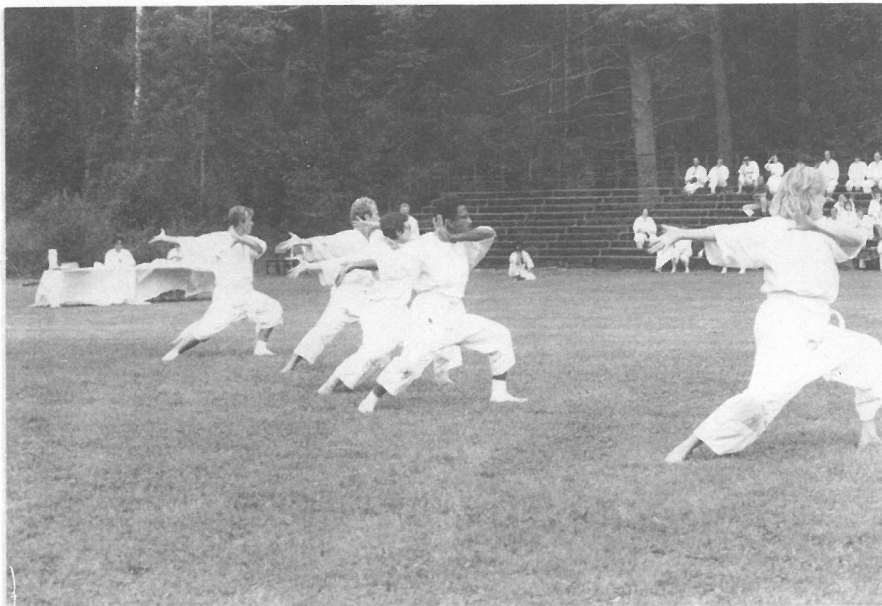


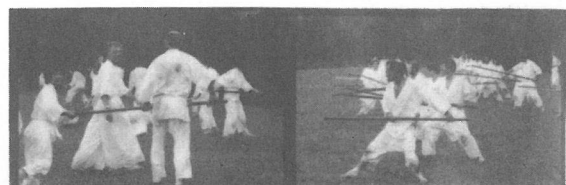


SHINTAIDO TEN
GASSHUKU

August 14-17, 1986







BAY AREA AND BERKELEY: JOINT CLASSES

The finale for 1986 Saturday morning classes in Berkeley was a pair of special classes led by special guest, Head Instructor Haruyoshi Ito, with joint participation by members of the Berkeley and Bay Area Shintaido groups.

Instruction included a new warm-up routine and Shintaido "Fire Walking" which I am relieved to report did not involve the use of real coals.

Another dimension was added to the keikos by the presence of guests from the Amma Institute, where Ito has been teaching Shintaido and where he and Bela have been studying traditional Japanese Amma massage.

Both of our guests were Americans, but each had his own special perspective on Eastern arts and cultures: Davis Everett leads tours of Japan and Ray Rodney lives in Nepal, where he leads wilderness expeditions.

Over coffee after keiko, one observer asked about the objectives of Shintaido, noting that much of our practice had the appearance of a build-up, but it did not seem to climax in the highly formalized movements one might expect in traditional martial or movement arts. The answer highlighted the way the means and ends in Shintaido can be one and the same, for our objective is to align our-

selves with the Tao by linking the energy of heaven, through our bodies, with the earth.

"...the means and ends in Shintaido can be one and the same."

The discussion reminded me of the way the highest benefits can be available to all who practice Shintaido, from the lowliest beginner on up. In an equally pleasing twist of thought, I realized that our guest, in initiating the conversation, had become a participant, contributing energy by helping us to pay attention to our practice from a perspective we might not otherwise have entertained.

--Pam Winter

THANKSGIVING BOHJUTSU WORKSHOP IN L.A.

Shintaido is alive and well in L.A. as the West L.A. group, under the direction of Claude Breant, invited Ito-sensei to lead a 3-day Bohjutsu workshop. 20 participants came from the Bay area, Gardena, and West L.A. (which probably has the largest French Shintaido population outside of France).

On Friday evening there was a getting-to-know-each-other dinner prepared by 5 French chefs! After, instead of Ito's scheduled lecture, there was sharing your experiences and visions about Shintaido past, present, and future.

L.A. WORKSHOP (cont'd)

Some simply didn't have enough Shintaido history, so their present experiences were dominant. One important point seemed to be the feeling of friendship and belonging within the group. For instance, some of the cooks work at the same place. They mentioned that they had a much easier working relationship since practicing Shintaido together. Christian, also from the West L.A. group, raised the point of being able to bring your troubles to keiko and deal with them. He gave the example of expressing anger and frustration through Eiko or in Kaikyaku-sho (I always thought that Kaikyaku-sho

or such *create* those feelings!).

Some of the group had been to Shintaido Ten and could compare their feelings before and after. Lori said it didn't hurt so much anymore to say good-bye to all the friends made through Shintaido; she realized that she would see them again anyway.

This feeling of being part of a larger (world-) community was another issue that was brought up. As scientists all over the world have the same vocabulary, we in Shintaido have a language with which we can communicate with people whose spoken language we can't understand. What freedom to be able to

Shintaido

*A New Art of Movement
and Life Expression*



by Hiroyuki Aoki

THE SHINTAIDO TEXTBOOK is still available! Order directly by sending:

\$ 8.95
1.30 (shipping)
.58 (tax-- CA only)

\$ 10.83 (CA residents)
\$ 10.25 (all others)

to: SHINTAIDO
P.O. Box 22622
San Francisco, CA 94122

120 pages
more than 200 b/w photographs
8½ x 11, perfect bound
ISBN: --942634-00-4

L.A. WORKSHOP (cont'd)

touch, run, or scream with someone whose name we may not even know!

Leslie recalled an experience she had during 'Ten': "...standing on the grass field with all these different people, looking at the sunshine reflected in the tree-leaves... I felt awestruck and privileged to belong to this movement."

Then Ito came up with another question: What do you like best in keiko? To my surprise many mentioned Kaikyaku-sho and Eiko. Quite a few also liked kumite and kata. Most seemed to agree about the 'drawbacks' of Renzoku jump.

Finally Ito shared a realization he had during his last visit to Europe. He spoke about a new reputation Shintaido is gaining in France, for instance; many students there took Shintaido very seriously. It was in such a way that after 22 years of Shintaido it dawned on him what Aoki-sensei was trying to do. The way I understood him was that Shintaido is becoming a kind of "trade school" for a new way or a new perspective of life. Maybe Hermann Hesse's fantasy in his *Journey to the East* will be actualized in Shintaido?!

(cont'd)

THIS NEWSLETTER IS PUBLISHED BY SHINTAIDO OF AMERICA

Head Instructor....Haruyoshi Ito

Board of Directors:

Haruyoshi Ito....Lifetime

M. Thompson.....Lifetime

Lee Seaman.....Northwest

J-P Marques.....Southwest

Bill Burtis.....Northeast

Term of office: 2 yrs. ending May 1987

Officers:

M. Thompson.....President

Bela Breslau.....V.P./Sec.

Bob Howald.....Treasurer

Kazu Shibao.....equipment

Jim Sterling.....SIC rep.

Officers appointed annually by the Board of Directors.

Articles of incorporation & by-laws are on file at the head office 145 Judah #6/San Francisco, CA 94122/ (415) 731-9364.

Membership 1987

Special 2nd Chance Off

My 1987 membership is enclosed:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

☐ General Member -- \$30

☐ Contributing Member - \$50 to \$100

☐ Sustaining Member -- \$100+ to \$500

☐ Patron -- \$500+ to \$1,000 or more

☐ Student, full time high school or college --\$15

Please make your check payable to Shintaido of America and send it to Shintaido, P. O. Box 22622, San Francisco, CA 94122. Your contribution is tax deductible.

QUESTION AUTHORITY?

In and out of Shintaido keiko, we are often faced with conflicting feelings if not outright confusion about some of the rituals and attitudes we are asked to respect. I am sure you have heard many explanations about why we bow upon entering and leaving the dojo, to each other before and after kumite, and to the sensei after keiko. And I am sure there are several who feel that all the attention to "sensei care" during gasshukus is fine for those who are either on a power trip or into obsequiousness, but is really anomalous in our culture and serves no important function.

I feel this kind of skepticism is very healthy when we consider the horrors perpetuated by blind obedience throughout the course of human history. On the other hand, if we are skeptical about everything all the time, with no room for acquiescing to "higher" authority, it is quite possible that our lives will be played out on one monochromatic level where few chances are taken and nothing is learned. The question seems to be: at what point does doubt leave off and acceptance begin?

Not an easy question either, but a start might be to say that whether you doubt or believe, you are uniquely responsible for yourself and the consequences of your actions.

When you agree to follow an individual or idea, it is completely your show; you cannot abdicate responsibility for that decision to any "guru" or institution. In other words, you have to think and make decisions for yourself.

Another hint to a way out of the dilemma can be found in two definitions for the word "authority". The first is "a person or group invested with the right and power to command, enforce laws, exact obedience, determine, or judge." The second is "an accepted source of expert information or advice, as a book or person." It is clear that we are right to be wary of the first kind of authority, to question it at every turn, but that we have to learn how to recognize and respect the second kind. We should never abase ourselves before "vested" authority, but we must be humble before true authority as the purveyor and embodiment of what is best in us as human beings.

"When you agree to follow an individual or idea, it is completely your show..."

In Shintaido keiko, we are often asked to perform movements and carry out assignments whose intent we may not understand, with the assurance that we will later on; in other words, form first, content later.

QUESTION AUTHORITY? (cont'd)

This is the traditional method of the transmission of *Tao*, and one which is undermined by excessive verbiage in the form of explanation and pseudo-spiritual gloss. Thus we are instructed to just do, but according to whose authority?

We should all feel called upon to exercise our own judgment, our own intelligence when deciding what authority to accept and to what extent we want to follow it. This requires a kind of thinking that goes beyond the shallow "I like it, it's great," "I hate it, it stinks" white rat response that too often passes for discriminating thought in this culture. We have to think deeply both about what we are asked to do and the motives of those who are asking us to do them, as well as about our own reasons for accepting or rejecting their views. Without this kind of reflection, we are in danger of either acquiring another set of mindless habits or rejecting something whose value we are too shallow to appreciate. Of course, we are treading a very fine line in this area which is why it has been said that "many are called, but few are chosen." One of the main aims of Shintaido is to take us deeper into ourselves, and so keiko-- which literally means "studying from those who have gone before"-- is our natural ally.

-- M. Thompson

L.A. WORKSHOP (cont'd)

After our last *keiko* on Sunday morning, we felt ready for the final picnic. Ito then presented us with our "homework": imaginary boh! Something you can do in the privacy of your own mind.

But before we said goodbye, there was some more impression-exchange:

Michael Goldberg commented on the easy acceptance by the "home group" he experienced during the workshop. Bela and Ben were happy to practice with so many new people. Lori and I seemed to share the anxiety that befalls us before a *gasshuku*: will it be real tough? Am I able to make it, etc... Even Claude admitted his own pre-workshop worries: will the group survive "awful Ito's" *keiko*? But he relaxed quickly. Maybe Ito's teaching method softened a little?

Whatever it is, it works. He received perhaps the nicest compliment from Christoph, who had been practicing Shintaido for only 3 months: "I felt during the workshop that there is something beyond the physical aspect in Shintaido..."

Will there be another workshop or even *gasshuku*? Of course! Next year, Thanksgiving in L.A., OK?!

-- Friedmann Schulz

