



CHINTO



The Bulletin of the Traditional Chito-Ryu Association of Québec

Original drawing by Sensei Jean-Noël Blanchette, 6th dan, renshi in Chito-Ryu

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A FEW WORDS FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The next Quebec seminar with Sensei Higashi will take place from April 27th to 29th. After the last training on April 28th, the annual general meeting of the [Traditional Chito-Ryu Association of Quebec \(ACRTQ\)](#) will take place. Why not take advantage of your presence at the seminar to come to the meeting? Your participation is appreciated and is especially important for group discussions and bringing in new ideas. Just participating is already a big step, and perhaps you might move things in a new direction!

In the martial arts literature we can read about spiritual concepts that permit a karateka to react instantly to the intentions of an opponent. Sensei Blanchette gives us his point of view on this notion of the presence of spirit.

In the Japanese tradition, it is customary to exchange small gifts, called *omiyage*, when travelling. Mathieu Volotaire did some research on *omiyage* to prepare for his visit to the Cape Breton dojo.

The Sohonbu is the “International Committee” of Chito-Ryu karatedo. By reading this issue of Chinto you will see that Quebec has representatives in this organization.

In January 2007, we received some comments from a reader about an article that appeared in the December 2005 issue of Chinto. You will find those comments as well as replies from those concerned.

Noël Blais
Instructor [Chito-Ryu Longueuil - SportsPourTous](#)

Translation: Paul MacKenzie

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PRESENCE OF MIND

To define the state of mind of an enthusiast in the learning of martial arts, common literature uses expressions such as «mushin», «wu-wei» «mizu-no-kokoro», «tsuki-no-kokoro», etc. It consists of a state where the mind is open to all things, totally available, never troubled, able to perceive the smallest action or intention of the opponent and able to react instantaneously, without thinking. Who does not dream of mastering these notions that stem from the Buddhist religion?

In fact, from a critical point of view, it consists of religious notions that require on one hand a definition of the human being as a body, mind and soul. On the other hand, these religious notions cannot, in any case, be dissociated from an ascetic (*) progression. The ascetic progression can be easily seen in the use of Japanese martial arts to bring the mind to control the body, and then, so that the soul can express itself through the body and mind. It is at that level that we reach, according to the Buddhist religious tradition, the «mushin» state. This state of mind should have an impact on the martial life of the enthusiast as well as on all aspects of his life. The difficulty lies with the capacity to understand and to actualize these most virtuous notions. Personally, I am extremely happy to see practitioners engage in karate-do and opt for an ascetic progression. However, one must have an idea of the path to take in order to allow for these notions to be actualized.

From my own experience, notions of «mushin», «wu-wei», etc, are relevant, reasonably speaking, to practitioners that have at least a 4th dan level; this is because they must first master many skills including the acquisition of automatisms. To acquire these automatisms, the student, under the rigorous teachings of a master, must submit himself to many conditions while taking into consideration various levels of stress, from the easiest and simplest to the most complex, hardest and most demanding. There are, for example, all of the combat exercises starting with kihon-kumite, then randori, ju-kumite, and the indispensable shiai.

However, before a student is submitted to different levels of stress, he must have acquired enough technical skills. To acquire enough skill, the technique will have been repeated hundreds or even thousands of times. Finally, to execute these techniques correctly, the student will have to use his mind and focus on the technique in particular. Therefore, to learn and master a technique, thinking is required. If you do not think, you do not correct anything and you do not learn anything. Karate starts right there! Not with vacuity of the mind, but with presence of mind.

In brief, there exist many notions that propose an ideal to achieve for all practitioners of martial arts. Submitting to the demands of the teacher, the efforts, patience and perseverance, are in due time, naturally rewarded.

Jean-Noël Blanchette, Ph.D.

Chief Instructor, [Académie d'arts martiaux Blanchette](#)

Translation: Marc Bolduc and Paul MacKenzie

(*) ascetic (adj.): that belongs to the ascetics, to ascetism.

Ascetic (n.): 1) a person who by piety submits himself to exercises of penitence, deprivation, or mortification. 2) a person living a life of austerity.

(Source : Le Petit Robert, 2002 edition)

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A VISIT TO THE "[Cape Breton Karate Club](#)"¹

During our vacation in September 2006, my partner, Véronique Janelle, and I, went to visit that which is called “Canada’s Ocean Playground”. We visited various sites and national parks in Nova Scotia and particularly in Cape Breton, in the northeast of Nova Scotia.

During a summer of training in my basement, I really wanted to train in a class with other people, in order to regain some motivation and also for the simple pleasure of being thrown on the tatami (hello Sensei Lefebvre!). I therefore decided to contact Sensei Sylvia Burrow, chief instructor at the [Chito-Ryu du Cap Breton](#) dojo and I received a very warm welcome.

But...

Before contacting Sensei Burrow, I thought to inquire about Japanese traditions for visiting dojos that one has not previously visited. I therefore started my research on customs and etiquette, and I learned many things:

The first is that at one point it was considered impolite, almost unthinkable, to contact a Sensei other than one’s own. The student-teacher relationship was so strong that people did not dare to betray it by going to train in another dojo. Trust was essential.

The second is that one had to ask permission of one’s Sensei to go train in another dojo, and furthermore, the dojo that would receive the visiting student had to contact the student’s Sensei to verify that the student had permission to study elsewhere.

In other words, Sensei A → student → Sensei B.

Otherwise, the visit might be badly interpreted by Sensei B (the host) because he might be either duped by the student, or be in an advantageous position with respect to Sensei A (the student’s regular Sensei) because the student would have wanted to quit his original dojo. And more, Sensei A could feel betrayed or put aside.

The third is that upon arriving, one must bring an Omiyage (see the definition below); same thing upon returning from one’s trip^{2,3}.

The fourth is that there are also little rules to remember upon one’s return to one’s own dojo, like not speaking about what one saw unless asked, always to rely on one’s own Sensei for instructions and to be courteous, as always.

OMIYAGE, a considerate gift, a souvenir, a product of the earth^{4,5}

お土産

Omiyage literally means “product of the earth”. In this little guide on the Japanese language⁶, I came across this expression they gave this definition: “(...) when a Japanese person leaves on a trip to see friends or family in a different region of Japan, he brings a small gift typical of the region where he lives, and then when he returns from his

trip he brings back a speciality of the region or country that he just left (these small gifts are called ‘*o miyage*’). Furthermore, one can see in many Japanese stations a large number of small shops selling specialities of the region, already wrapped and ready to be carried and offered as ‘*o miyage*’.”

These gifts are like currency in Japan and the tradition of omiyage persists, especially since the concept of Giri (obligation) is well entrenched there. When one leaves on a trip, one is practically obligated to bring back a gift. The gift of the earth is the speciality of the region visited, and when the receiver of a gift goes away for a visit, that person must in turn give a gift upon his return.

After having read all of this information, I asked Mr. Charles C. Goodin, a lawyer and karateka practicing the Mabatsu Shorin-Ryu style and who studied with O'Sensei Chitose. Mr. Goodin is a karate researcher as well as chief instructor of his own dojo, leading the Ikari Karate Museum⁷ in Hawaii and publishing numerous articles in magazines such as "Budo Magazine", "Dragon Times" and "Martial Arts Magazine".

I asked him the question about the etiquette of omiyage and visiting other dojos. Here is what he says of this on his web site⁸:

"If you plan to visit a dojo, especially for the first time, please bring an omiyage. If you are traveling, bring the omiyage from your home town, perhaps something special to your area. Then you can say something like, "these are macadamia nuts from Hawaii" or "this is sourdough bread from San Francisco." You get the idea.

"Please don't misunderstand. I don't sit around eating sweets! The pastries or gifts are not the focus. They are just tokens. In fact, bringing an expensive gift is even worse than bringing nothing at all because it would obligate our dojo and members. We will have to reciprocate. An omiyage is a token of appreciation for being allowed to enter the dojo.

"Remember, don't go empty handed."

The idea of the gift is not the price, but the intention. It is also good to note the following things about omiyage. If you go there alone, the responsibility is yours. If you and your Sensei go there, the responsibility of omiyage is that of the Sensei. Traditionally, at least.

So there you go. To put all this into practice, I requested all of the permissions and in my enthusiasm to depart, I forgot my omiyage at home. Luckily, Sensei Burrow did not hold this against me and I sent it to her by mail when I got home. And a month later, I thought about giving a gift to my own Sensei.

Customs have changed and omiyage is not a requirement of all teachers today. However, I find it a beautiful custom to keep going.

And so why underline this little event?

To remember that beyond the movements, makiwaras, and sweat, there are people and means to forge friendships, even if they are short, and to share enriching moments in the pleasure of practicing the same art, and doing so far from home. Of course, the courses were in a different language, but after 2 hours, I was no longer in Cape Breton, and I no longer spoke English or French; I was simply a guy training in karate with other people with the same passion. And that makes me feel at home no matter how far away I am.

And that is incredible.

In order in the photo: (left to right)

Mathieu Valotaire, Sensei Sylvia Burrow, Laura MacIsaac and Matthew Sinclair (it was a special summer training, a period where the dojo is usually closed)



Mathieu Valotaire

Student at the [Dojo Chito-Ryu de Drummondville](#).

Translation: Paul MacKenzie

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7. Hawaii Karate Museum, <http://museum.hikari.us/>
8. Karate Thoughts Blog, <http://karatejutsu.blogspot.com/>

General References

Email discussions with Sensei Charles C. Goodin.

Le Japon.Org → Japon, <http://www.lejapon.org/info/>

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SENSEI BLANCHETTE ON THE SOHONBU

Sensei Jean-Noël Blanchette, Ph.D., 6th dan, Renshi and chief instructor of the [Académie d'Arts Martiaux Blanchette](#) forwarded to me the news that he is a member of the "Chito-Ryu Karatedo Sohonbu". The Sohonbu is the "international committee" made up of about thirty members who perform various duties. Among the Japanese who make up the majority of the committee, we find Kugizaki Sensei, 9th dan, Kyoshi, who holds the post of Sohonbucha; Higashi Sensei, 8th dan, Kyoshi, Vice-Sohonbucha; and Tanaka Sensei, 6th dan, Renshi, secretary and director of the technical division of the Sohonbu. Sensei Blanchette is a member of the technical division in research and development. This is very good news for Québec.

After Sensei Blanchette and I discussed the membership of the Sohonbu, he referred me to the [Chito-Ryu International](#) web site. You can see the membership of the Sohonbu yourself at the following link: [Chito-Ryu Karatedo Sohonbu](#). By visiting this site I noticed that there is another Québec instructor on this committee: Sensei Germain Bisson, 5th dan, Shihan and chief instructor of [Karaté Cama](#). Sensei Bisson is a member of the technical division in competition combat.

Photo: Kugizaki Sensei (right) beside Sensei Blanchette.



Noël Blais

Instructor [Chito-Ryu Longueuil - SportsPourTous](#)

Translation: Paul MacKenzie

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COMMENTS FROM A READER AND ITS REPLY

In January 2007, we received comments from Mr. Alain Denis about an article that appeared in the French version of Chinto, December 2005. The article in question was in the section “Karate vs. Physical Education and Health” and was entitled “Eating Well To Perform Well”. The comments and their replies are reproduced here in their entirety, without editing or translation in order to avoid unintended changes.

First comment

« Dans cette parution de Chinto, de déc., 05, l'article Karaté vs éducation physique et santé.

Voici les observations que j'aimerais apporter :

Tout d'abord, le terme *versus* signifie : par opposition à ; surtout pour les oppositions de type binaire, i.e. masculin vs féminin.

Or, je crois que le Karaté n'est pas en opposition avec l'éduc . ni la santé »

Second comment

« Ensuite, l'article de Denise Gauthier site

Les Lipides, 2^e paragraphe :

... L'énergie qu'apporte les lipides est utile...

(3^e point) Les acides gras trans : idem.

Je tiens à souligner qu'il n'y a aucune mention des dangers des ces gras trans, comme si de rien n'était . Il sont banni dans certains pays d'Europe par législature. Nous l'avons illustrer par la médecine les dommages cardio-vasculaire. J'inviterais une mis en garde lorsqu'on parles de ces substances néfaste créer pour ajouter saveur et longévité de conservation au aliments qui les contiennent, sans aucun plus value pour la santé de qui que ce soit, athlète olympique ou pas.

Note pour la diétitiste :

L'étiquetage de tous les aliments au Canada doivent, par la loi, indiquer le contenu en gras trans. Mais la loi est sans profondeur, car beaucoup d'étiquettes indiquent gras trans '0', alors qu'ont peut quand même lire les ingrédients et apercevoir des huiles hydrogénées ou partiellement hydrogénées, qui sont en soit de gras transformés , y inclus le 'shortening' d'huile végétale.

Alain Denis

Membre ACRTQ. »

Reply to the first comment (Ms Isabelle Minier, in charge of correction and revision)

« Bonjour M. Denis,

Que dire, sinon que vous avez raison. On constate souvent l'utilisation du terme latin versus lorsqu'on veut comparer des éléments qui ne devraient pas être en opposition. Emprunté à l'anglais, l'expression n'est pas toujours appropriée en français. Toutefois, l'usage n'est pas critiqué par tous les spécialistes de la langue. On trouve entre autres dans le Multidictionnaire de Marie-Éva de Villers que l'un des synonymes de versus est l'expression par rapport à. Pour éviter d'utiliser versus, nous aurions donc pu intituler l'article Le karaté par rapport à l'éducation physique et à la santé. Mme de Villers souligne la forme fautive de versus lorsqu'il est employé dans le sens de contre (ex. : Kramer vs Kramer) et mentionne effectivement qu'on emploie l'expression dans les oppositions à deux éléments. Pour ma part, je fais partie de l'école de pensée qui croit que pour évoluer, une langue doit être libre de ses usages. Par conséquent, lorsque cela est possible, je laisse les rédacteurs libres du choix des termes utilisés. Ceci étant dit, je suis ouverte aux critiques constructives, car mon objectif principal est de m'assurer de la qualité de la langue du Chinto et d'en faire un outil de communication efficace et professionnel. »

Reply to the second comment (Ms Denise Gauthier, author of the article)

« L'article publié en décembre 2005 intitulé "Bien s'alimenter pour bien performer" avait pour but de souligner au lecteur l'importance de consommer à tous les jours, tel que recommandé dans le guide alimentaire canadien, une variété d'aliments afin de combler les besoins en vitamines, minéraux, et

autres éléments nutritifs essentiels pour permettre à notre corps de bien fonctionner et de bien performer.

Votre inquiétude concernant le manque de précision sur les acides gras trans est très légitime. Vous avez tout à fait raison de mentionner que la consommation d'aliments contenant des gras trans est très nocive pour la santé.

Toutefois, afin d'alléger le texte, j'ai choisi de restreindre mes propos et ne mentionner qu'une consommation excessive de lipides pourrait générer des risques importants sur la santé.

Désolé pour tout inconvénient qu'aurait engendré le manque de précision à ce sujet.

Denise Gauthier ,
Dojo Karaté Cama. »

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NEWS IN BRIEF

- The next **seminars with Sensei Higashi** will be the 27th, 28th and 29th of April 2007.
- **Exams** with Sensei Higashi will take place on Friday, April 27th at Longueuil.
- The **annual general meeting** of the ACRTQ will take place on April 28th 2007 in Montréal immediately after the last training session of the day with Sensei Higashi.
- The ACRTQ has a **calendar** of events that is regularly updated. You can access it via the web site of the association: <http://www.debeur.com/chito-ryu-quebec.html>.
- For all **comments** or **suggestions** regarding Chinto, send a short message by email to blaisbenoit@hotmail.com.
- To **subscribe** to Chinto, send a message to this effect to Sensei Thierry Debeur by email at chinto@debeur.com.
- The **next publication** of Chinto: **June 2007**. Send your text to blaisbenoit@hotmail.com.

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