

Editorial

A rather slim edition this Autumn I'm afraid. Brought out in time to announce the Autumn event in Bristol on the first weekend of November! Since this is one of the first events I'll actually be able to attend myself, I'm greatly looking forward to meeting you all again and berating you for the lack of input!

Feedback from Japan has come in the form of the ISF Newsletter from Japan, a portion of which I am reproducing here.

Dear Shintaido members all over the world:

It gives me great pleasure send this Report of HAGURO2000 to you.

The gasshuku was a special occasion to meet Shintaidoists from all over the world. During the gasshuku, special keikos and events were held amidst great nature, a sense of oneness was shared with others, the philosophy and techniques of Shintaido reconfirmed.

1.Data of participants:

The number of all participants : 220

male : 122
female : 98

the number of the participants from each country

France : 30
U.S.A. : 17
U.K. : 6
Australia : 4
Swiss : 3
Belgium : 2
Italy : 1
Japan : 157

==report from Britain =====

Our trip to Japan from Britain

We have many fond memories as we think back to our special trip. We were all from Bristol and it has meant a lot to us to be there together. The effects of this event have been many and profound on our lives they will be long lasting and some yet to unfold.

As we think back we remember the weather being reminiscent of our life in the UK- wet and green! We remember the hospitality which was very friendly, comfortable and relaxed. The most important thing for us all was meeting people who practise Shintaido coming together as a world community. Being present at such an event was very special. It was also special being in the Japanese culture some of it very ancient and preserved and some very dynamic and changing. The influence of young people seems very important and dynamic. Jesse the young person in our group was the one to mention the relaxed comfortable atmosphere, this is a good sign if young people are contented!

A big thank you to the organising committee you were very thoughtful and hard-working. The Sensei care team was a pleasure to work with, learn from and sometimes have a good laugh!

The final keiko was very moving for us the sky was big and blue, the mountain solid reminding us of a permanent core that changes shape gradually over time. At least half of us shed many tears below that mountain it was humbling. It was good to look up to keep looking up and continuing to see and experience beauty provided by nature.

Thank you for making this happen in a country that appears to be overworking its people, for taking time to create something of your own to share with visitors, something unique and individual and very communal.

Many flowers have bloomed in Britain this year the fields and our outdoor dojo are bursting with colour we see them more vividly assisted by our Shintaido practice.

You are in our hearts and minds always.

==report from France=====

REPORT FROM HAGURO 2000
By Jean-François Dégremont

IMPRESSIONS SOLEIL LEVANT
Impressions (from the country of) rising sun

For many of the French practitioners, Haguro 2000 has been not only the first occasion to take part in an international gathering of Shintaido but also the first trip to Japan and meeting with the Japanese culture.

It is obviously not possible to convey here the great diversity of personal feelings, especially as most of members took the opportunity to travel in different places. Anyway, through the stories and accounts given in many occasions since coming back, some topics tends to come out more generally. Here are some of them.

- About the practices :

The great diversity of the practices offered during Haguro 2000 was especially appreciated. Beyond the possibility to "do one's shopping" in the different classes, each one could take this opportunity to experiment various ways of teaching. For example the teaching of Wakame-taiso presentation in various classes by teachers with very different personalities was experienced as highly instructive. The diversity of teaching methods, the way to structure (or unstructure) the class, the approach in teacher/student relation, were especially appreciated and gave to many the opportunity to better situate themselves.

Because of meteorological fancies, there were sometime a little too many persons in one place and noise from neighbouring groups could make it difficult to concentrate. But of course, that was also the occasion for each practitioner to improve one's own space management and that would contribute in return to the melting between people from various keiko cultures. The French practitioners have especially appreciated the huge diversity of feelings and expressions that came from kumite practices with partners of a so big variety (of age, of culture, of language, of Shintaido origin). This has been for many the occasion of real discoveries, of renewed astonishments and deep joys. Encounters, at the highest sense of the word, have obviously been numerous and, if only for this reason, Haguro, was a great success. In return, these encounters triggered many enriching questionings. For example, it was possible to wonder about the link between the feelings experienced and the cultural belongings of the partners.

The importance of the Yokitai Shintaido in many groups, especially American and Japanese, and the very high level of practitioners in this branch of practice was unanimously pointed out. This triggered many debates upon returning in France, were

Yokitai Shintaido has often been considered as a minor practice in comparison with the more "noble" discipline of "classical" Shintaido. The examinations have been highly appreciated, especially as it appeared that, at a certain level, technical abilities were not the only criteria of evaluation. On the other hand, some practitioners had the occasion to benefit from extra personal advises at the end of practices and were very grateful to the instructors giving even more so.

- About the lectures and "officials" sessions :

French participants have discovered, sometime with a great astonishment, the peculiar modes of opening, concluding and presentation that went along with the Haguro 2000 event. That was an opportunity to discover a largely unknown aspect of the Japanese culture. In France, such a formalism, such long speeches, quite repetitive and dogmatic are most unusual nowadays. They arose a real curiosity and, to be honest, a rapid disinterest for some of them especially as they sounded like "mouthing of platitudes". Even so it was interesting for some people to recognise there some ceremonies that had been imitated in some past occasions in France. For many French participants, the meeting with the original culture of Shintaido is a thrilling and enriching experience and at the same time, they don't feel like participating slavishly without questioning (from a culturally situated stand point) the social opportunity to carry on with such or such social behaviours.

- About the warm welcome and practical organisation of the event :

All the participants have been deeply moved by the great quality of reception, the dedication of the organising committee and its unlimited availability. The desire to accomplish the mission to perfection was clearly visible and so many small attentions given to each one of the participants were very impressive, very pleasant and always well timed. The French participants felt truly welcomed and taken care of and they feel a deep gratitude for the group in charge of the practical organisation of the event.

Experiencing the life in a traditional Japanese inn was very much appreciated. The numerous "strange" small details of this daily life were the source of many humorously cheering and astonishing situations : horn blowing during morning office, toilet

slippers, crowded accommodations behaviours so different from French, punctuality and fluidity so useful for acting in a huge group. The impeccable cleanness of accommodations was most impressive as well as the kindness and the quality of the people servicing the meals. The quality of the Japanese food, its diversity and originality gave the opportunity for many discoveries and, as you may imagine, was a topic of excited discussions among the french community.

Then there is all that can be lived but barely told : affection among participants, the pleasure to swim among human diversity, the gratitude for our great seniors or the admiration for the incredible achievements of the extraordinary technicians and also the simple joy to be learning. For all of these, words are not enough. We shall then wait for the next occasion to tell it with our bodies. This the french participants to Haguro 2000 are awaiting now with excitement.