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Hockenheim 2010. Contribution to the martial arts tourism

Submission: 20.06.2010, acceptance: 23.07.2010

Key words: martial arts, wing tsun, escrima, EWTO

Abstract: The author of the study has accepted an invitation to "Grand International EWTO Seminar" as an honorary guest. He flew to Frankfurt am Main (the largest airport in Europe) via Rzeszów and arrived in a small town of Hockenheim. The seminar which lasted a few days took place in a large sports hall rented for this occasion. The EWTO (European Wing Tsun Organisation – Organisation for Wing Tsun and Escrima) is the largest European commercial organization of the Asian martial arts. Its founder and leader is Prof. dr hab. Keith R. Kernspecht, Dr *honoris causa* of the University in Plodiv, holder of the 10th master rank in *Wing Tsun* kung fu and 6th rank in *latosa escrima*. Prof. Kernspecht is also a member of the Scientific Research Committee of the Idōkan Poland Association and the Editorial Board for "Ido Movement for Culture".

The idea and programme

Prof. Kernspecht brought together European and regional leaders of the EWTO teaching Wing Tsun (WT) and escrima, including Bill Newman. Grand Master (GM) Newman is a holder of the 10th master rank in escrima. He is a visiting professor of the University of Plodiv.

The training, which took place from 22 to 24 May 2010 was called "Die großen 7" (The great 7). The number refers to the following factors: 1) attention, 2) movement, 3) balance, 4) unity of the whole body, 5) sensory perception 6) timing, 7) the spirit of fight. There were also planned examinations for the master ranks.

As well aiming to train the EWTO participants the conference had a commercial aim. But the organizers also aimed for this conference to brought together researchers of martial arts; people representing scientific institutions from many countries. It is even a more valuable event in view of the Scientific Congress in Rzeszów, which is going to take place this year.

On 21 May there was a Symposium of the EWTO's leaders in which the author had an opportunity to participate. The event was intended for the instructors of the ranks 3 TG and above. The author had a chance to meet dai-sifu G. Schembri, O. König, A. Gross, T. Schrön and others. Prof. Kernspecht, who is developing "scientific" Wing Tsun kung-fu, held an introductory lecture. GM

Kernspecht introduces a new interpretation of WT system and the phenomenon of combat itself.

On 22 of May at 9 o'clock the first practical exercise took place with a division into groups. The practice was carried out, with a lunch break, until 5.30 pm. on Saturday and Sunday. Additionally, on 23 of May, in the afternoon O. König organized for a group of scholars a visit to a nearby Heidelberg, to a new seat of the EWTO. The European headquarters of this organization is in the same building as the Institute of Anthropology and Human Genetics of the renowned University in Heidelberg. It is a modern, well-equipped Academy of Martial Arts with a usable area of several hundred square metres.

The presentation of the advanced Wing Tsun kung-fu under the supervision of GM Kernspecht was fascinating. The participants were not practising the basic forms, they were not using either dummies or weapons. The master taught anticipating an attack and acting beforehand, capturing the attack, generally speaking, external and internal elements of Wing Tsun in a practical application. A novelty – not only for the author – were "the pushing hands", generally associated with Taiji quan. The exercises of *qigong* were taught in separate groups. GM Kernspecht went outside the restrictions of the system, showing weak points of "the old school".

The author has been dealing with traditional fencing for many years, however, in Newman's school there are slightly different positions, guards and movements (Japanese *tai-sabaki*) than those

used in the traditions of China, Japan or Okinawa. The same specifics concerns the usage of sticks and clubs. Thus, it was very interesting to gain the basic skills in *escrima* under the supervision of Grand Master Bill Newman. Great International Seminar in its programme dealing with *escrima* concentrated on the "off lining" issue.

In the evening, during the official dinner, the advanced students of GM Newman's made a dynamic, full of humour performance of *escrima*, for example with a ladder used in a fight. Whereas, on Monday 24 around 4 pm. there was planned an official closing of the Seminar. Unfortunately, the author had to leave earlier due to his own seminars on Tuesday. During the closing ceremony there were supposed to be given the diplomas and delivered the final speeches.

To sum up, in the Seminar participated 2 Grand Masters with the 10th master rank of the EWTO organization, their advanced assistants and over three hundred active participants of this international seminar. From Friday to Sunday the participants worked in total for 20 hours. There were also additional activities on Monday. It was a good practice, with outstanding organization of the seminar and it could be called a mutual success.

Reflections I. The Chinese tradition

What is the source of knowledge [cf.: Cynarski 2000a, b; Cynarski, Obodyński 2003] of the Chinese tradition of martial arts? According to Kernspecht [2010a] the communist authorities of China murdered almost all kung-fu masters (except the village of Chenjiagou). That is the reason why the original kung-fu was preserved only in Hongkong, Taiwan and in Chinese communities outside China. *Shifu* Kernspecht has been studying *Wing Tsun* for many years under the supervision of Great Master Dr Leung Ting. He gained the knowledge of the internal, spiritual aspects of martial arts at first hand [cf.: Maliszewski 1996, pp. 43-51; Kernspecht 2004].

The author used to know the first form of *Wing Tsun* and tried to practise the technical elements of this style, as well as the related *Jeet Kune Do* [Lee 1975, 2003; Maliszewski 1996, pp. 121-126], for example practising the techniques on the mummies. The style of *Zendo karate Tai-Te-Tao* [Sieber 1993, 2001; Cynarski, Sieber 2007] practised by the author contains elements coming from this tradition. It applies, for instance to half distance trap blocks, the rule of water (as in jujutsu), taking over the initiative or chain techniques.

The techniques taught by Kernspecht reminded the author in many cases of classical jujutsu, aikijutsu

or karate - the times when those martial arts were developed on the Japanese islands and Okinawa with a substantial influence of Chinese kung-fu. Anyway, similar technical solutions could have appeared on their own. One way or the other, many movements were new for the author, many others were familiar to him. All of them were completely different from sports jujutsu, judo or karate.

In accordance with the spoken tradition, *Wing Tsun* was created by a woman. It came into being as a system of combat for people who do not possess great physical power. In comparison with the styles where it is required to master a few dozens of forms, the process of teaching (as a way of gaining useful skills) is much shorter.

The popularity of WT across the world was initiated by Bruce Lee, when the world of martial arts found out about the fact that Bruce started his kung-fu studies with the aforementioned style. He also, through his cooperation with Dan Insanto, contributed to propagating Filipino martial arts. Now however, WT is present in mass culture independently of Bruce Lee's films [cf.: Aichsleider 2009].

II. Escrima

For the author it was not the first contact with the Filipino martial art. The author has been cooperating for many years with Hans-D. Rauscher (at present 9th *antas* in *Combat Arnis*), the leader of DAKO – German-Asian Martial Arts Organization. In *Combat Arnis* there are more Filipino cultural elements-terminology, the outfits of practitioners. At Prof. Newman's more attention is paid to real combat with sharp weapons. Bill Newman emphasised during the practice the fact that movements made with a stick are the movements of a sword or a machete (*bolo*, *kampilan* etc. [Newman 2005, pp. 169-172] – „We are fencers, not stickman”. The same refers to the old Filipino art *kali* (the way of hand) [Newman 2005, p. 28; cf.: Maliszewski 1996, pp. 92-106].

The Grand Master, when asked about a journey to the source, i.e. the Philippines, denied having made one. He had never been to the Philippines. He was studying *escrima* in California (USA), mainly under the supervision of Grand Master Rene Latosa (*Latosa escrima* style). Newman claims that at that time the original martial arts were unknown in the Philippines. Only some time later the Filipino noticed that teaching martial arts was a good business opportunity and new "traditional" martial arts started to arise [Newman 2010].

Currently Bill Newman holds the highest the 10th master rank in *escrima* and develops his own school



Photo 1. Researchers on a table, Hockenheim 2010 [courtesy of Prof. K.R. Kernspecht]

[Newman 2005], which has been given by him an individual, more European character. He teaches, among others, combat techniques with European weapons. There is a school of thought that the European martial arts (fencing in particular) have been preserved in the Filipino tradition of martial arts [Cynarski 2004]. Whereas, in Europe martial arts were stopped to be taught in a systematic way and they were replaced by a sports fencing.

III. New quality

The first and the second Grand Masters go beyond the frame of traditional systems, complement and develop them – obeying however the basic rules of strategy and combat tactics. Through their long experience they influence the improvement of the martial arts, which they have been practising and teaching. The example of that may be “pushing hands” associated with *taiji quan* and “internal” Wing Tsun in the advanced programme of K. R. Kernspecht.

Prof. Kernspecht told the author about similar rules and the origin of Wing Tsun and Taiji, about teaching “internal” Wing Tsun and *qi* energy. *Qi* may be identified, in Kernspecht’s opinion [2010a] with a perfect timing. During the practical classes there was an opportunity to practise those rules in the technique of pushing hands. It was the example of the Chinese paradoxical logic, when a given movement was simultaneously a pull and a push (a unity of contradictions) [cf.: Cynarski 2002-2003].

GM Newman, in turn, teaches using many different weapons simultaneously with hands (fists), legs etc. [Welge 2005]. He also went beyond teachings of GM R. Latosa. As a British lord he makes a connection with the native tradition and teaches wielding historical European weapons (fencing, fighting sticks). He deals with the application of *escrima* in self-defence, in training uniformed services and in sports.

A meeting of martial arts researchers

The EWTO seminar was also a meeting of scholars, researchers and theoreticians of martial arts from Bulgaria, Lithuania, Germany, Poland, Russia and Great Britain. The following people participated in the meetings: Prof. Vesselin Margaritov z Plovdiv (Bulgaria), Prof. W. J. Cynarski from Rzeszow (Poland), Prof. Arseny E. Tarabanov from Saint-Petersburg (Russia), Prof. K. R. Kernspecht from Germany (representing the University of Plovdiv Paisini Hilendarski) and his Ph.D. student Oliver König (Austria, 7 master rank WT), Prof. Bill Newman (UK), Dr hab. Svetlana Justickaja from Vilnius (Lithuania), Dr Siegfried Wolf (Germany, 7 dan karate), academic staff from Great Britain – Alan Foster (the President of World Martial Arts Council) and Charles Spring (4 dan karate), Germany and Bulgaria.

After the scientific meetings in Krosno and Targowiska [Szajna, Kunysz, Cynarski 2008], Chengdu (2009), Viseu (2009), Taipei (2009), Katowice (2009) [Cynarski 2010] and Porto

(2010)¹, the event in Hockenheim was another: the most recent meeting of experts and researchers of martial arts before the Congress. One of the author's goals was the promotion of the 2nd World Congress of Martial Arts and Combat Sports in Rzeszow. It was made possible thanks to Prof. Kernspecht, who is a member of the Scientific Committee of this Congress. There was a great interest in the Congress and many people expressed their willingness to participate in it actively. Additionally, Prof. Kernspecht praised a high standard of the Scientific Year's Issue "Idō – Ruch dla Kultury / Movement for Culture" as the best scientific publication concerning martial arts on the market. The author also gave out a few copies of the book *Martial Arts and Combat Sports – Humanistic Outlook* [Cynarski 2009], which also gained a lot of appreciation.

The author accepted the offers of cooperation between the universities in (Bulgaria) and Derby - Buxton - (UK) and the University of Rzeszow within the European Programme Erasmus. There certainly will be a continuation of the declared cooperation.

Independently from the scientific dimension, it is worth mentioning the educational and self-accomplishment significance for the author and other participants of the mentioned events. The facts confirm the theses included both in the **humanistic theory of martial arts** and the theoretical **concept of martial arts tourism** [cf.: Cynarski 2010].

As a consequence of the meeting in Hockenheim the World MAC Scientific Research Institute was founded at the World Martial Arts Council

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¹ At the 7th EAASS (European Association for Sociology of Sport) Conference in Porto there was an opportunity to meet a few researchers of martial arts and combat sports, who expressed their interest in a participation in the Congress.

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Hockenheim 2010. Przyczynę do turystyki sztuk walki

Słowa kluczowe: sztuki walki, wing tsun, escrima, EWTO

Streszczenie

Artykuł jest relacją z seminarium „Grand International EWTO Seminar”, w którym autor uczestniczył jako gość honorowy. Została ona zorganizowana przez EWTO (European Wing Tsun Organisation – Organisation for Wing Tsun and Escrima), która jest największą europejską komercyjną organizacją azjatyckich sztuk walki. Jej założycielem i liderem jest prof. dr hab. Keith R. Kernspecht, dr *honoris causa* Uniwersytetu w Płowdiv, posiadacz

10 stopnia mistrzowskiego w *Wing Tsun* kung-fu i 6 stopnia w *latosa escrima*. Prof. Kernspecht jest też członkiem Komisji Badań Naukowych Stowarzyszenia Idokan Polska i Editorial Board „Ido Movement for Culture”.

Szkolenie nazwano „Die großen 7” – wielka siódemka, gdyż brano w nim pod uwagę następujące czynniki: 1) uwagę, 2) poruszanie się, 3) równowagę, 4) jedność całego ciała, 5) stopień sensu, 6) timing, 7) duch walki. Przewidziano też egzaminy na stopnie mistrzowskie. Techniki nauczane przez Kernspechta były dla autora w wielu przypadkach jak spojrzenie na klasyczne jūjutsu, aikijutsu lub karate – na czasy, gdy owe sztuki rozwijały się na wyspach japońskich i na Okinawie przy istotnych wpływach chińskiego kung-fu. Autor opisuje tradycje powstania stylów *Wing Tsun* i *escrima*, a także swoje doświadczenia w ich praktykowaniu

Oprócz szkolenia kadr EWTO i celu komercyjnego, organizatorzy doprowadzili do spotkania badaczy sztuk walki – ludzi reprezentujących instytucje naukowe z kilku krajów. W seminarium udział wzięło dwóch Wielkich Mistrzów z 10 stopniem mistrzowskim organizacji EWTO, ich zaawansowani asystenci, oraz trzystu kilkudziesięciu czynnych uczestników tego międzynarodowego seminarium. Było ono jednocześnie spotkaniem naukowców z Bułgarii, Litwy, Niemiec, Polski, Rosji i Wielkiej Brytanii – badaczy i teoretyków sztuk walki.