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## SEMINAR IN HOCKENHEIM AND REFLECTIONS ABOUT EVOLUTION OF MARTIAL ARTS

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### Key words:

- martial arts,
- WingTsun,
- escrima,
- modernization.

### Abstract:

The author describes the methodological and scientific seminar, in which he was a participant. It was the Grand International EWTO Seminar in Hockenheim (Germany), hold in May 18-20, 2013. prof. Keith R. Kernspecht taught WingTsun *kung fu*, and prof. Bill Newman – escrima. Some lectures of self-defence psychology were presented as well.

The report is the starting point for a reflection on the evolution of martial arts and tourism, which is contributing to this evolution. On the one hand, it applies *kung fu* and self-defence and the escrima and art of fencing on the other hand.

Evolution is provided by the tradition of martial arts especially conducive to long-term practice, thoughts of experts (who know different varieties of martial arts), and meetings of experts – as described below.

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### SHORT INTRODUCTION

The author describes the methodological and scientific Seminar, in which he was a participant. This is the starting point for a reflection on the evolution of martial arts and tourism, which is contributing to this evolution.

The Humanistic Theory of Martial Arts and the conception of martial arts tourism [Cynarski 2009, 2012a] give the theoretical perspective for the reflection. The method of content analysis of the literature, participant observation and direct interviews were used.

### GRAND INTERNATIONAL EWTO SEMINAR, HOCKENHEIM 2013

The next Grand International EWTO<sup>1</sup> Seminar took place in Hockenheim (Germany) at the Stadthalle Hockenheim, in May 18-20, 2013. The topic was “Distance & Feeling in Combat”. The organiser – the European WingTsun Organisation – did it for people who wish to study such martial arts as *WingTsun kung fu*, *escrima* and *chi-kung* exercises.

WingTsun (*VingTsun*, *Wing Chun*) is a Chinese style of *kung fu*, in transmission of GM Leung Ting and GM Keith R. Kernspecht. Escrima is a Philippine martial art, especially art of fencing, taught here in transmission of GM René Latosa and GM Bill Newman. GM Newman adds to escrima a European chivalrous spirit. Chi-kung (*qigong*) is a system of exercises practised for health.

About 200 participants, instructors and advanced students from Europe and some other countries (Indonesia, Israel, USA), came here for this study. Among teachers were: GM prof. dr Keith R. Kernspecht, 10<sup>th</sup> degree (Germany), GM Bill Newman, 10<sup>th</sup> degree (UK), GM Giuseppe Schembri, 9<sup>th</sup> degree (Switzerland), dr Oliver König (Austria), dr Petra Weipert and other EWTO instructors.

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<sup>1</sup> EWTO – the European WingTsun Organisation

Among honour guests were: prof. IMAS Charles Spring (University of Derby, UK, 3<sup>rd</sup> degree in WingTsun, 5 dan karate *shukokai*), and dr hab. prof. UR Wojciech J. Cynarski (2<sup>nd</sup> degree in WingTsun, 7 dan karate *idokan*) from Poland. It was like 3 years ago in this place, when it was a meeting of martial artists and researchers [Cynarski 2010].

A day before EWTO instructors met during the seminar. Participants had occasion to see a premiere of the “The Grandmaster” – it was 4<sup>th</sup> film about the biography and legend of GM Yip Man. Yip Man is the very important point in history of the WingTsun *kungfu*.

The second premiere that day was a new book by prof. Kernspecht [2013]. The book is sacred for prof. Horst Tiwald (†2013), who was a mentor of K.R. Kernspecht. It is on the evolution of WingTsun – from white crane *kung fu* to the great Grandmaster Yip Man, GM Leung Ting and the new form created by *shifu* Kernspecht.

*Notabene*, the 12<sup>th</sup> volume of the “Ido Movement for Culture. Journal of Martial Arts Anthropology” aroused the interest of participants (among the martial arts literature), too. Some experts expressed their wish to co-operate with the Journal.

The first lecture during the Seminar was titled: “Distance in the pre-fight phase”. It was presented by dr Hubert Beitler, prepared by H. Beitler und Jurgen Kestner (EWTO GmbH, Heidelberg). They pointed that “there is no speed, there is only distance”. It is a very controversial opinion.

Later it was a very intensive training course – 3 or 4 times of 90 Minutes each day. WingTsun students practised particularly a reverse planning in *chi-sao* and *lat-sao* (forms of fighting) over the various distances. Escrima students worked with “distance and feeling” problem, with stocks.

In the afternoon, dr Uwe Füllgrabe, consultant police psychologist and lecturer at the state police college for lower Saxony, presented his lecture: “Scientific basis of survivability”. It was about psychology of self-protection and strategy for success in the game of life.

Next paper this day titled “Sensory awareness” was presented by Sascha Rimasch (EWTO).

On Sunday, 19 May in the same Stadthalle banquet was prepared. During this event students from some countries presented demonstrations, with music and humour. In serious part of this banquet W.J. Cynarski handed for prof. Kernspecht the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Medal of Idokan Poland Association (because of the long time and successful scientific cooperation). And some instructors received certificates for degrees in martial arts.

## REFLECTION ABOUT DEVELOPMENT OF MARTIAL ARTS

Tradition is not something which is closed. It is a really living process. And the evolution of martial arts is not finished [cf. Kernspecht 2013: 25]. Traditional practicing of martial arts means doing it without corrections. But, in many styles and schools grandmasters add modifications. The changes can be written as 3Es: **Evolution**, **Europeanization** (or *westernization*), and **Efficiency** as the goal of modernization. There are indicators of the evolution of many today’s martial arts.

Bruce Lee [1975] in his short life made a revolution in martial arts. He was a pioneer of new training methods, new forms of combat sports (kick-boxing, and something like MMA). He has given an example how old system should be modernized. Today, many of living grandmasters (as Harald Weitmann, 8 dan *hanshi*, or K.R. Kernspecht [2013a]) agree, that it was an important part of inspiration for them.

GM Jigoro Kano changed old *jujutsu*, later *meijin* Minoru Mochizuki, and Kenji Tomiki, and e.g. dr Wally Strauss (10 dan), and *meijin* Lothar Sieber [Cynarski 2012b]. Old centres as origin for each martial art, are not always new destinations for the tourism of martial arts. As Kolbowska [2010: 87] writes on capoeira: “Young teachers from European countries, so-called *Gringo* (non-Brazilians) admit, that they drive to Canada, for example, to

learn new techniques, because there is still evolving capoeira. They drive to Brazil to learn the culture” [of this country]. It concerns the evolution of today’s martial arts.

Kernspecht’s travels to the United States and China confirm this phenomenon. Today GM took trips to study martial arts repeatedly. Thanks to this Heidelberg (the seat of EWTO) and Hockenheim are tourism destinations as the new martial arts’ centres.

### **KUNG FU AND SELF-DEFENCE**

It is the privilege of the author to know such eminent experts of **self-defence**, as *meijin* Lothar Sieber (10 dan *jujutsu* and *karate*) and *shifu* Kernspecht. Both are complete warriors with competences in 9 martial arts. Both of them are specialists not only on the European scale.

**Kung fu** of Kernspecht school and the EWTO organisation create a system of self-defence. There are no sport competition in this style. It is the main aim for traditionalists (*VingTsun*, *Wing Chun*) and reformers, like Leung Ting (born 1947) and Kernspecht (1945).

According to the contents of the film “The Grandmaster”, Yip Man tried to include Hsing-I and Pakua techniques into his school. And GM Kernspecht [2013: 31n] goes toward the inner WingTsun (WT). He writes: “Since 13 years of experimenting every day about four hours, and I think virtually at least the next eight hours, as my WT to improve and make it easier ... How can I teach WT as internal system” [Kernspecht 2013: 51].

This *kung fu* style has been evaluating since many years. One of the most outstanding Yip man’s students – Leung Ting – has already introduced some modifications [Kernspecht 2013: 57n, 82-84]. He also changed the name VingTsun into WingTsun. Kernspecht breaks some limitations of the old style. The above technique puts the principles of tactics.

Inspired by B. Lee, Kernspecht took training with his direct disciples in the United States. Then he went to the WT and *escrima* – martial arts practised once by Little Dragon. Thanks to it he met e.g. GM Leung Ting and prof. Bill Newman.

### **ESCRIMA AND ART OF FENCING**

Sir Bill Newman, lord of Dilish, is the second GM in EWTO with 10<sup>th</sup> degree. He enriched Philippine **escrima** thanks to his own interests in European weapons from Midleage (traits by GM Lichtenauer and others). In this way the school of GM Newman is more European [cf. Newman 2005, 2013; Cynarski 2011].

There are various *escimas*. E.g. Jeffrey Doug [2002] shows the school of GM Cacoy Canete (*doce pares escrima*). Hans-Dieter Rauscher (9 *antas*/degree) teaches *combat arnis*. In many schools double sticks and long stick are the main weapons [see: Somera 1998]. But in the school of B. Newman the most important is **fencing**. Techniques are performed with sword, supplemented by hand techniques and kicks.

Bruce Lee [1975] suggested various solutions fencing for close combat in his conception of *jeetkune do*. The influence of the art fencing on the development of combat techniques cannot be overestimated. It is not only the impact of *kenjutsu* on *aikijutsu*. E.g. *shihan* Kenji Tomiki used the technique of *kendo* in his *judo* / *aikido* school, and sensei Dan Ivan – *inkarate shito-ryu* [see: Ivan 2002: 222; Shishida 2010].

In some traditions, as in famous Japanese school of *kenjutsu* (*tenshinshodenkatorishinto-ryu*), the basic techniques are forms of fencing. Teaching of Polish traditional fencing is realized in a similar way [Zabłocki 1989, 2000]. For ancient warriors skills of using the historical weapons were usually the most important. And the Newman’s *escrima* goes in this direction. It is the martial arts for real fight – for fighting for life.

## CONCLUSIONS

It appears that as a result of the synergy, a potential of the ancient martial arts and today's development comes to produce a qualitatively new form. The impact of westernization, especially the Europeanization is beneficial, significantly enriching the heritage of the old masters. Evolution is provided by the tradition of martial arts, especially conducive to long-term practice, thoughts of experts (who know the different varieties of martial arts), and meetings of experts.

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