

Training Course with Bob Nash (USA), 6th Dan JKF Wadokai, and Toby Threadgill (USA), Menkyo Kaiden, Shindo Yoshin Ryu Jujutsu from 17th to 19th February, 2007 in Berlin

Approximately 130 participants, including guests from Hungary, the Netherlands, and Sweden, trained for two days under the guidance of Bob Nash and Toby Threadgill in Berlin. It was a special experience to gain a first-hand impression of Toby Threadgill's outstanding skills.

"Always be mindful of performing a living kata (Ikata kata) and not a dead kata."

Hironori Ohtsuka

This quotation by Ohtsuka Hironori can be seen as the guiding principle of **Bob Nash's** training sessions at the Berlin course. He referred to *embusen* and *seichusen* to illustrate the notion of ikata kata. *Embusen* means the line followed by a person performing kata. Being cognizant of the *Seichusen* is a fundamental principle of any martial art and this is very apparent Wado karate. *Seichusen* – *sei*: correct, *chu*: center, *sen*: line. This is an imaginary line on which an attack occurs and on which the defender acts/reacts. As long as *seichusen* is observed one cannot be injured by an attack. In ikata kata, *embusen* and *seichusen* form a single unit.

"... As you move along the *embusen* you defend and attack through the *seichusen*. When you perform your living kata, your *seichusen* must be as narrow as feasible. When you perform your kata, ... your body must move as one without leaving parts of it behind (when you go, you go) and when your body settles at the end of a movement, it never gets in a position where your center of gravity forces you to be stuck to the floor (*itsuki*). All of this together makes for a living kata, ikata kata."

Bob Nash. From: www.wado Guseikai USA.

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During the two-day course and at the instructors session on Monday evening, which was attended by 30 black belts, Bob Nash demonstrated and taught these principles using mainly Pinan kata.

Toby Threadgill heads one of the two official branches of Shindo Yoshin Ryu worldwide. (The other branch, Shindo Yoshin Ryu Damonkai, is headed by Fujiwara Ryozo in Japan.)

Shindo Yoshin Ryu is a development of Yoshin Ryu which was founded by Akiyama Yoshitoki in the mid-sixteenth century. The tradition of Shindo Yoshin Ryu Jujutsu dates back to Matsuoka Katsunosuke (1836 –1898) in the late Edo period.

Ohtsuka Hironori, the founder of Wado Ryu, began training in Shindo Yoshin Ryu Jujutsu at Nakayama Tatsusaburo's (1870 – 1933) dojo in 1905 when he was 13 years old. He was granted Menkyo Kaiden in Shindo Yoshin Ryu by Nakayama in 1921. (Only in 1922 did he meet Funakoshin Gichin with whom he trained until 1935.) So there is originally a link between Shindo Yoshin Ryu Jujutsu and Wado Ryu.

Toby Threadgill succeeded in making the participants of the course aware of this historical legacy. By means of numerous techniques from the field of tantodori, idori, tachidori – shinken shirahatori (sword defense) performed with partners, he showed the origins and common points of Wado Ryu and Shindo Yoshin Ryu Jujutsu. These include throws as in kihon kumite 5 and 10 and, more generally, breaking the attacker's balance (*kuzushi*). With techniques from tantodori, idori, and shinken shirahatori, Toby Threadgill illustrated the interaction between contemporary Wado karate and the *koryu* (ancient art) of Shindo Yoshin Ryu Jujutsu.

Toby Threadgill's approach to teaching was also most convincing. He first demonstrated the techniques with his partner and then gave many participants the opportunity to practice both the attack and defense with him. As a result of this, the participants got direct feedback on the effectiveness and power of the techniques. After this, everybody had ample time to practice with their partners.

Bob Nash and Toby Threadgill conveyed an idea of the interaction between the historical origins of Wado Ryu based on Shindo Yoshin Ryu Jujutsu and Wado's constant development up to the present.

Sources:

- T. Shaw: Wado Ryu Karate and Jujutsu. Part 1 and 2.
From: <http://www.wadoryu.org.uk/jujutsu.html>. [Version: 05.03.07]
- Bob Nash. From: <http://www.wado Guseikai USA>. [Version: 11.05.06]