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Impressions from recent Activities in Lyon and Tokyo

On my last trip to Germany I could meet again with Dominique in Lyon / France for the Seminar with Endo Sensei on Sep. 27th/28th. The first evening I joined the regular Keiko in one of Dominique's Dojos where I also met Erik again who followed Endo Sensei on his 'Tour de France'. We enjoyed the wooden floor for the warm up before changing to the main Dojo - with mats ☺. Then 2 days each 2 hours with Endo Sensei and the last day in the huge Judo Center where all of us 130 participants enjoyed the freedom of space, rare for such seminars. But Endo Sensei still managed to reach us all for demonstrating his techniques. After his usual striking and awareness exercises we did various jiuwaza from shomen uchi and katate dori. New for me the practice from gyaku yokomen uchi.



Besides Aikido I enjoyed Dominique's and his friends' hospitality, excellent food and some sightseeing in the old city of Lyon with perfect late summer weather.

Then 5 days later I was in Tokyo Honbu Dojo. With 3 classes every day I must admit that after 5 years I wasn't aware anymore of the intensity of practice there. I found myself looking to the clock after half of the second morning class: "how long I still need to survive?" But always I made it to the end in dignity. Then a good rest restored me for the evening class.



Another challenge were the tatami in Honbu, i.e. the hardness that took my knees 3 days to get used to and the slippery cotton surface, that requires more energy for movement, like for usheru ryote dori, racing around tori and compensating when the centrifugal force makes you slither over the mats.

Meeting with so many high grade senseis within 5 days I was keen on finding out their styles. But to my observation there are no big differences and I would put them into clusters with just some special emphasis: Doshu and Ueshiba sensei with the very standard close to what I was used to; the second group with senseis Yasuno, Irie, Osawa, Miyamoto; then Seki sensei also a bit special with his minimized footwork and extremely powerful ki extension; of course Masuda sensei with his grandfather like care is also somehow special.

Then on Wednesday morning after Doshu's class a very special moment for me to see 3 Doshu's life on the mats. Ueshiba Sensei came with his wife and son for a photo for their family photo album. Quite cute the little boy in Keikogi with Papa and Grandpa as he is getting trained for his future role as the 5th Doshu.

Also interesting the old Aikido gentlemen in Doshu's class around Chiba sensei, some with more years Aikido practice than my own age.

I also met several times with Chenyi from our club who practiced 2 weeks in Honbu Dojo, as well as with other friends from Shanghai Masako san and Stella.

All in all two very exciting weeks and now I am thinking of my next trip to Japan.

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