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October Golden Week and Keiko in Wuhan

I spent the „golden week" in Wuhan together with my family. Before my departure I checked the opportunity to be a guest at one or two keikos. Some friends told me about the Wuhan dojo. Actually, there are two of them: one in Hankou and one in Wuchang, south of the Yangze river. I planned to visit the Wuchang dojo, because my wife's family lives in this part of the city, but unfortunately I heard that the Wuchang dojo closed its gates – not only during holidays but for a longer time… The dojo will move to another place.

So I decided to visit the Hankou dojo, even if it would take me more than one hour by car. I told my brother in law about Aikido and at least he decided to join me. We arrived early so that we could watch three or four groups of children practicing karate, each of them under the guidance of one instructor. When they left, the first Aikidoka came in: some kids too, who immediately started doing some mae ukemi – without any warm up. They´re still young!

After the ceremonial greetings and a short warm up (including some ukemi, for sure), the teacher demonstrated some techniques. It seems as if they like a rough style out there in Wuhan! I tried to handle two different kinds of knife attacks. For me as a guest from Shanghai and a foreigner, I was offered an English speaking instructor, who watched my exercises with my partners and helped me to improve my first attempts in this unknown technique. We only did two or three different techniques at both of the keikos I participates this week and at the end I felt as if I really learned something new.

All the people in the Wuhan dojo have been friendly and helpful and I look forward to visiting this place again. So I took home a lot from these two keikos: some experience in a new technique, and some impressions and some memories. But I left something behind too: My brother in law caught fire after only one keiko: he decided to start Aikido and he already bought his own dogi.

Henrik Koehler

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