

13th International Jô Seminar - Penang 2015



The 73 participants

73 participants, 19 countries from 4 continents. It was, from the 1st to the 8th of August, an unforgettable exchange of technical knowledge as well as ideal human relationships.

The *Shômen* included the picture of Donn F. Draeger Sensei to remind everyone that it is thanks to him that international *Jô* seminars have started in 1979, in Malaysia, and that without him, the development of *Jô* outside Japan would have never met the success it had these last 40 years.

The left calligraphy “*Dai-Dô Mu-Mon*” (To great ideas, no gates) reminds us that the practice of *Shintô Musô Ryû Jô* (right side calligraphy) is open to all. A message which is not always as well understood as I wish. (maybe a problem with “herb” style?)...

Although the weather was not so good, daily rains favouring a high level of humidity, we were extremely lucky and had to leave the field because of the rain only twice.



The entire curriculum of *Shintô Musô Ryû Jô* was reviewed during these 8 days, associated weapons included. The few technical differences were discussed quite openly.

Our sincere gratitude goes to Johnny Seow, the organizer of this event. He did not spare his time and was available at any time to help anyone out.

Another big thanks to all those who helped him in his heavy

task. It has been a wonderful week, intense training followed by unforgettable evenings in a very friendly atmosphere.



Our dôjô



The Welcome Dinner took place on the 1st of August, Swiss National Day. The Swiss group was invited to sing the National Anthem... a disaster! which ended up in a Japanese “drinking song”...

Programme

Every morning, at 06h00 sharp, our “Shômen ni rei!” mingled with the sound of the close Muezzin calling the Muslims for the first daily prayer.

Breakfast time from 07h00 to 09h00. Then, back to the field until noon with two teachers, each day different, plus myself, to take care of the less advanced trainees.

From 15h00 to 18h00, same thing again, continuing the programme, interrupted by demonstrations and explanations from the teachers present.

Apart from a *Mondo* Q&A meeting and a calligraphy presentation, evenings were free. Wednesday, excursion day, the rain kept us away from a planned jungle walk, but not from enjoying a marvellous meal near the seaside further South of Penang Island.



“Heritage Hotel”, a wonderful place, very near the training field (when the rear door was open...) including two restaurants where we were welcomed in turn everyday.



Through the whole week, we tasted various and excellent dishes, as copious as tasty.



Seiretsu! in the seniority order of the study of Shintô Musô Ryû Jô



Delivering *Oku Iri* to Daniel Cailleux. Welcome in *Seiryukai-Europe* to this teacher of the group of Grenoble, France, a person of great humility who has devoted himself to his group since several decades ago.



Delivering *Menkyo Kaiden* to Johnny Seow. Having started *Jô* in 1972 with Draeger Sensei and isolated for some 20 years, without *Uchidachi*, Johnny practised "shadow training" to keep SMR in his brain. Without anyone above to deliver him this well-deserved certificate, and knowing his work and abilities, I thought it was my duty to do it in front of Draeger Sensei's picture.



Delivering *Menkyo Kaiden* to Larry Biery whom I met in Japan in 1974. Having tested his capacity during a whole week in Geneva this Spring, I took the liberty to deliver this certificate to this US citizen with whom I have kept up a close relationship during the past 41 years. A certificate which he felt very difficult to obtain in his own country.

Exams session

On Saturday afternoon, the last day of the seminar, some ten candidates tried for *shodan*, *nidan* and *sandan*. Most of them were Europeans (with *Uchidachi* from several continents), but also Lucas Leong Kok Kong (right), the most advanced student of Johnny Seow, now in *Kagewaza*, who wished to profit of this very special occasion. Despite some small "problems" all have been successfully promoted for the required grade.



Embu

A *Embu* particularly rich by the variety of the source of the *Embusha* and the diversity of the performed disciplines. I was bent on doing my *kata* of *Jûdô Ne-waza* (1) in memory of Draeger Sensei since it is thanks to this discipline that I met him and that I have been introduced to *Jô*, to *Iai* and to calligraphy.



Glen Henry (Aus) and his student demonstrated *Gojû Ryû Karate*, *Saifa Kata* and *Bunkai* (2). Michael, very elegant, showed *Kyokushin Karate* and *Tai Ji Quan* (3). Franco and Lorenzo *Aikidô Suwariwaza* (4) and our two new EJJF teachers *Ran-Ai* (5).



6



7



8



9

Two beginners of the Indonesian group took the risk of performing *Monomi*, well done! They had studied it a few hours before (6). Michael and Kees for *Jutte*, (7). Sergio and Lorenzo for *Kusarigama* (8) Seow and Lucas for *Chûdan* (9), ending with *Musô Shinden Ryû-lai*, *Shochi Ryû* and *Tenshin Shoden Katori Shintô Ryû*, below with Lorenzo (10).



10

A few days before the seminar

The Minister of Youth and Sport of the City of Georgetown, YB Chong Eng, (red shirt) honoured us with her visit to officialize this seminar with a welcome speech. She insisted on taking a group picture with the seminar banner (right). On the other hand, Johnny Seow had invited Chinese calligraphers for a demonstration during which they offered me several beautiful calligraphies (right, lower). However, they didn't do it without testing me first (below). The rest of the time, Seow and I reviewed the entire curriculum of *SMR Jô* in his lovely *Dôjô* ESA of which the entrance is right in the middle of a typical restaurant.





Farewell party

On Saturday night, a gargantuan meal waited for us in a huge Chinese restaurant. A wonderful evening.

I shall end this report with a picture of Seow and me taken at the Penang airport. A big thanks to this little man full of positive energy, full of humor, who has been the central reference during this whole marvellous *gasshuku* (*gasshuku* in Seow's language).

Pascal Krieger



We also had the pleasure of meeting Karunakaran Sensei (at right on the picture) who was kind enough to visit us during the seminar.

Karuna Sensei was the closest student of Draeger Sensei. Lately, his health caused him many problems. His wife told me he was severely ill and that a recognition of his status from me could help him a lot. I urgently wrote a *Menkyo Kaiden*

for him and sent it to him 4 months ago to acknowledge all the work he did to develop *SMR Jô* in Malaysia.

We were happy to see him still walking and exchanging a few words. Unhappily, and despite our official invitation, we did not have the pleasure to have anyone of his group participating in the *Gasshuku*.

We wish him better health and thank him, his wife and his son Nanis from the bottom of our heart to have been kind enough to come to see us.



Above, the group of Australians after having participated to the seminar. They convinced us to consider the next edition of IJF International Jamboree of *Shintô Musô Ryû Jô* in their country, in August 2018.

Please note it down in your agenda!