



Master Huynh Ngoc An (10th Dan) is the Grandmaster of Vietnamese Wing Chun Kung Fu school. He came to Russia in 1990 and since then organized Wing Chun Kung Fu Federation with schools in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Odessa, Ufa and Nizhniy Novgorod. During his recent visit to N. Novgorod Master An kindly allowed our correspondent to visit his advanced class and told about his life and work in Russia. Master An does not speak and understand Russian well, so two of his students helped us to understand each other.

Huynh Ngoc An started to study Kung Fu at the age of 8 in the school of the Master Ho Hai Long. In addition to constant training and exams Master An had to do all the work around the house. In accordance with tradition he took care of his master just like he were his own father.

Along side with Wing Chun Master An also practiced other martial arts: taekwondo, karate and aikido. Master An said that from his point of view Wing Chun was the most effective school as regards health-improving. Master An did not criticize other schools because it is considered unethical in the East.

Master An told me about Wing Chun style in many details. I should note right away that it is hard to find masters of other styles occupying the same rank in Russia. All Wing Chun students have a unique opportunity to study Kung Fu from Patriarch himself. Without flashy slogans and advertising he guides his students on the path to perfection.

It is known that in all other styles of martial arts the most practitioners should be physically strong and healthy people. They first reach a particular level of physical strength and only then they may be told about the “secrets” pertaining to breathing, blood circulation and other physiological processes.

Master An developed a unique system and after talking to his students it became clear that anyone can reach the highest levels of mastership. Master An confirmed this by giving an example about one of his students who being physically weak and ill showed good results after practicing particular techniques. His physical and mental state improved and continued to progress. Needless to say that a healthy person has even more chances to improve his physical condition. The essence of these techniques is the so-called Khi Cong breathing exercises, which are combined with regular fighting techniques.

It seems that these exercises are those very special hidden techniques. Master An mentioned that he began to study them only after he trained for 10 years. The effect

of these exercises is notable even after a few months. The students of Master An showed a very difficult warm-up set and several sparrings where ladies easily defeated men twice their sizes. In real-life situation neither height nor weight are of significance. However, Wing Chun is not all about fighting or self-defense. It is a system, which covers both physical and mental development of a person.

Khi Cong is translated as “work of breathing”. Difficult stances, some resemble yoga, breath-holding exercises and all the time perception of exercises, concentration followed by relaxation – all of this is based on the eupnea.

The healing effect of Khi Cong is quite obvious - the students of Wing Chun school are rarely ill. The bones and muscles strengthen, some difficult exercises seem an easy routine, ligaments become flexible, short breath disappears, blood pressure normalizes and the overall state of health improves, buoyancy and energy increase. Master An told us that in Vietnam 80 and even 90 year old people practice Khi Cong and remain hale and hearty.

I deeply regret that I did not have the chance to see Master An in action but after all – I was in the class of his students.

During the entire class Master An corrected his students if they did something wrong. He said that he loves all his students but that does not stop him from being very strict during classes. It is a necessary element of education and all students understand and respect this.

