

## PSYCHOLOGY AND SOCIOLOGY

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# Axiological, personality and behavioral determinants of an individual's behavior in a situation of danger

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### Abstract

**Problem.** The paper examines an impact of safety and physical culture on individualistic, behavioral and axiological determinants of functioning of a person in threat situations and a stereotype existing in common consciousness, related to individuals professionally associated with security.

**Method.** The authors refer to the category of *Type “A” Behavioral Pattern*, on basis of which behavior of these individuals was examined in the context of security culture.

**Results and Conclusions.** Studying the research group of students of security, martial arts and combat sports, the authors argue that presently this stereotype related to social expectations and close to used category of *TABP* has no confirmation. It is also noticed, that behavioral and axiological determinants of analyzed persons' behavior in threat situations are closer to values associated with martial arts, than impulsive reactions comprehended as stereotypical.

### 1. Introduction

In the seventies in Poland a phenomenon of Far Eastern forms of Martial Arts appeared. Many people have actively engaged in Martial Art practice. Moreover they were interested in theoretical basis of these disciplines, which are related to specific motivations, noble aspirations, attitudes and a warrior's lifestyle and worldview. Over the time the phenomenon gained a mass character and now it affects many enthusiasts and professionals. Far Eastern Martial Arts presented a fascinating path of self-fulfillment<sup>1</sup>, which aimed not only to obtain high physical fitness, but also to become resistant to hard living conditions, reach psychological maturity and security.

Security for any individual or collective entity is a multilayer phenomenon, manifestation of which explains the spectrum of following concepts:

- **desired state**, which for every entity is the level of effectiveness of control over threats possible in a given place and time to values important for this entity; in other words, security is a state that reflects the result of potentials' difference – self-defense potential on the one hand and threat potential on the other, which exist in a specified space-time;
- **value**, which fulfills our needs of lack (*basic needs*) and higher needs, i.e. those that never cease (*meta-needs*) with self-fulfillment on the top of their hierarchy;
- **development process**, which is a meta-need of a man and enables personal and social increase of potential that creates autonomic defense of subjects of security.

The ideal of psychophysical and ethical mastery reached through intense work on one's own body and mind turned out to be very inspiring. Very rich Far-Eastern cultures of India, Tibet, China and Japan and martial arts and combat sports in the 20<sup>th</sup> century became available worldwide. All of these axiological, praxeological, organizational, pedagogical and psychophysical values are associated with a Far-Eastern recipe for creating

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<sup>1</sup> Self-fulfillment is constant aspiration to realize one's potential, develop talents and possibilities, the process of becoming “who one wants to be”, internal coherence and fulfillment of destiny.

security culture and was implemented by many types of uniformed services, which duty is to provide security to civilized societies. Therefore in Cracow Research Institute for Security and Defense research project described below was conducted.

In this research project the authors observed the influence of physical culture [Piwowski 2013: 92 and foll.] on the level of safety culture [Nakamura 2005] as well as personality, behavioral and axiological determinants of functioning of an individual in the context of physical activity in situations where safety is threatened.

Juliusz Piwowski and Vasył Zaplatynskyi formulated a definition of the discussed phenomenon:

**Culture of security/defense. Definition by Piwowski – Zaplatynskyi:**

Security culture is the whole fixed, material and non-material achievements of the mankind that serves defense understood militarily and non-militarily. It is a trichotomy that consists of three streams: mental and spiritual, organizational and legal, and a material one. Security culture serves a man to achieve following objectives:

- Maintaining and cultivating the state without danger, in relation to a certain individual and collective entity, or having efficient control over arising threats;
- Restoring security in a situation where it was lost in result of an increase of certain threats towards entity;
- Optimization of levels of multi-aspectual security of a certain entity (comprehensive security);
- Stimulation of social and personal awareness and beliefs about the need of self-improvement and trichotomous development on a personal and social scale and creation of motivation and attitudes that result in individual and collective actions consistent with these beliefs, and increase of the potential of autonomous defense of individual and collective subjects of security [Piwowski 2014].

Let us also remind that "...whatever is trained in the East, when it comes to Master this always be the goal: spiritual perfectiveness of self-improving man" [Wójcik 1995: 45]. The study was focused on a group of students trained to perform roles strongly connected with security, including, among others, hand-to-hand combat. It was assumed that the personality of such individuals would develop towards and express certain values associated with safety culture. In the consideration of these problems, we adopted a securitological approach [Jarochkin 2000], especially emphasizing the first pillar (of the three identified by Marian Cieślarczyk: mental, organizational and material) [cf. Cynarski, Litwiniuk 2003: 166] of safety culture. Nowadays in Japan and all over the world there are groups of people, who apply to their lives ideals of Bushido or value systems analogical to honorary code of Samurais. We should also keep in mind utilitarianism of Far-Eastern leads, which recommend to combine stability with change, inter alia in managing [Aluchna,

Płoszajski 2008]. Within such an approach to self-improvement combination of tradition with dynamicity of modernity becomes possible. During Meiji modernization, Japanese emperor Mutsuhito, along with military elites of the Empire, in 1882 officially renewed their adherence to Bushido [Ślósarczyk 1939] and its main virtues (such as: righteousness, wisdom, courage, kindness, respect (politeness), honor, loyalty, honesty, family pietism and self-control) [Piwowski 2012].

The study raised the issue of personality and normative behavior modifications [Czajkowski 2010] and touched the problems of interpreting human actions in axiological categories, which are relevant to the overall image of combat sports [Wilson 1982; Stevens 2000]. In Japan this conception was called *Karade de oboeru* – "learning throughout the body" [de Mente 2006]. A very precious element, which serves implementing *karada de oboeru*, is practice of martial arts by individuals, who are looking for an intense method of self-improvement. It is unnecessary to prove how great potential is offered by various Far-Eastern martial arts [Cynarski 2000: 17].

## 2. The area of study

The discussed research project relates to the axiological, personal and behavioral determinants of an individual's actions in the context of a threat to security. This context pertains to the individual's feeling of security, which may be shaped differently, depending on one's personal traits and repetitive behavioral patterns (e.g. Type A). Process of education is a complex system of activities performed in social relations that lead to gaining by an individual knowledge, skills and social competences. Especially the latter two of indicated categories are important when considering the problem of values and normative beliefs. Gaining skills and social competences is connected to process of creating the values hierarchy and the set of normative beliefs, which have an ordering significance and serve increasing the level of abilities associated with evaluating behaviors and ways of functioning.

Referring to views of Sandel, who is lately believed to be a declared advocate of the world of universal values [cf. Sandel 2012], one should treat values and normative beliefs as highly important criteria of a social order. Building the system of values and normative beliefs is a process, which is of key-importance for building security culture from axiological and constructivist point of view. We mean, first of all, the first pillar of security culture, which contains individual identity of socially aware entity and culturally universal evaluation criteria for activity of a man in social surrounding.

**2.1. The concept of "Type A behavioral pattern" (TABP)** [Czajkowski 2006] is often indicated as useful in describing and explaining the functioning of an individual in the context of various actions pertaining to the

issue of broadly construed security. TABP is defined as a behavioral indicator relating to persistent disposition towards a way in which an individual enters into relationship with the (physical and social) environment. On the level of behavioral indicators, type A behavioral pattern is characterized by the following traits: (1) strong pressure towards achieving independently set, albeit not very clear goals; (2) a deep-seated tendency towards intensive rivalry; (3) constant pursuit of successes and of the reaffirmation of one's worth; (4) constant involvement in multiple and varied projects, usually featuring deadlines; (5) habitual inclination to increasing the pace of performing multiple physical and intellectual actions; (6) exceptional physical and mental vigilance. One of the more common methods of examining Type A behavioral pattern is the Jenkins Activity Survey (JAS). JAS was also used in this study. While establishing his method with the use of factor analysis, Jenkins distinguished three dimensions of Type A behavioral pattern:

1. H-D – hard-driving: competitiveness, involvement, conscientiousness, tendency towards rivalry;
2. S-I – speed, impatience: dynamic behavior, way of speaking, irritability, impatience;
3. J-I – job involvement.

The questionnaire includes a scale of TABP, which consists of questions that best diagnose this behavioral indicator, and a TABP sub-scale comprising the three aforementioned factors, selected in view of the results of a factor analysis. The established Type A characteristics suits the stereotypical image of an individual in the role of a leader, commander, manager, etc., a person demonstrating involvement, intensity of the effort and the psychological and somatic cost of the emotional and physical strain. Note: This aspect of the subject's functioning is usually interpreted as a nonadjustable meaning of Type A behavioral pattern.

### 3. Methodological approach adopted

In their interpretation, the authors examine the consequences of particular behavioral patterns for the effects of the individual's actions, the course of said individual's social interactions, and the way the individual functions in the cultural area. Mechanisms of creating systems of values and normative beliefs, which are basis of the first pillar of security culture, become an important element in the process of educating young people. This is particularly important in relation to groups of professionals, who operate in widely understood security issues. Raising the issues of psychological and axiological regulators of activity of an individual operating in a situation where security is threatened leads to analysis and interpretation of moral boundaries of individual's behavior. Interpretation of the system of universal values invariably leads to the problem of allowable behavioral limits. Studies on the social

influence revealed significance of the social and situational context for substantial modification of standard behaviors of an individual, which go beyond universals in the scope of values, and thus cannot be accepted as they arouse opposition. At the same time such cases lead to recollections of the category of heroism as a behavior that is on the other end of the range of variability of described dimension of human behavior. The methodology demands the distinction between the *explicit* and *implicit* values, and the *attitudes* they determine. This methodological approach implies differences between the experienced values and attitudes. Indication of such a distinction is well-founded especially, when one raises the issue of self-improvement within the frame of professional activities in the work with students, who are trained in martial arts [Czajkowski, Piwowarski 2010: 17-23]. This may cause consequences related to the results received. Reference to the methods of self-observation in the shape of scales of values usually leads to a situation where participants declare acceptance of certain values. This however is not a sufficient material to make a conclusion on expression of these values on a hidden level (values expressed *implicite*). Results connected to expressing values on the explicit level seem to be a less reliable source of information on relevant, real regulator of a person's behavior. This problem is complex also because of natural differences in the ease of insight into functioning of an entity conditioned by personality variables. Therefore values expressed *explicite* are not a very credible material received from interviewees. That is associated especially with construction of self-observation methods, in which participants declaring specific values, express rather opinions and beliefs, which are accepted and expected in certain social and cultural conditions, than with which they would identify. Access to deeply internalized values and normative beliefs expressed *implicite* is much more probable when used are such research procedures, which provide insight into the implicit values. Due to social and cultural determinants of an individual's behavior in the context of danger and a controlled level of security, it is expedient to conduct research in an international environment.

**3.2. The participants.** The study was conducted on the students of the School of Higher Education in Public and Individual Security "Apeiron" in Cracow during a training assembly for sports and martial arts in May 2011. Subject taught there include, among others, judo, karate, kickboxing and jujutsu, treating in an extended way the axiological elements and other aspects of the theory of martial arts [Piwowarski 2011]. The experimental group of 64 included 27 women and 37 men. It was a group study, with participants filling out the JAS form which is used to measure Type A behavioral pattern. The results were supplemented by demographic data.

#### 4. The objective of the study and the research question

In the course of the study, we emphasized the behavioral determinants included in TABP, which in fact means analyzing the behavioral syndrome that is the individual's stable, preferred way of interacting with the physical and social world [Czajkowski 2006]. Thus the defined research objective gave rise to the research question. The authors wanted to establish how Type A behavioral pattern influenced the way the individual functioned in contexts connected with safety/danger.

It was assumed that the conducted study would display the adjustable or nonadjustable influence of Type A behavioral patterns, due to the significant role that *features of intensity of behavior* play in that mode (vide opinions of Master Yamaga Soko) [cf. Varley 2000].

**4.1 Hypothesis.** We tested the hypothesis that individuals who undertook studies in the field of theory and practice of security, and who were intensively trained, among others, in hand-to-hand combat, would not display behaviors comprised by the Type A behavioral pattern. The assumption was also rooted in the need to scientifically verify the stereotype of an officer of the uniformed forces that is common in social consciousness. It is expected of the discussed groups of people to act intensively (dynamic behavior, irritability, impulsiveness), actively and with a significant level of involvement (rivalry) and responsibly (job involvement). During our research, we found that there was the need for constructing an integrated model of how the subject functioned in the professional role of an officer, who, among others, receives training in close combat, counteracts threats, guarantees security and makes it possible for citizens to realize their need for safety [Kocowski 1982]. In the model we put forward we assumed the great significance of values and attitudes that constitute important regulators of human behavior and influence the quality of life, which is a relevant aspect of security culture [Czajkowski, Piwowarski 2010: 17-23].

In our study, we posed a question of the meaning of different variables for the functioning of an individual operating in the area of public and personal order and security. An overview of the subject matter indicates there are certain stereotypes relating to persons in the line of work dealing with protection, attributing them with behavioral features connected to intensity. We formed hypotheses about the decline of this trend of perceiving the behavior of officers and about the changing social expectations from the members of uniformed services. It was assumed that the results pertaining to the presence of TABP would more likely indicate Type B behavioral patterns which are construed as traits that are, to a point, opposite to TABP. Additionally it was also stipulated that the results obtained via the JAS form might be modified in relation to demographic variables. In accordance with

the classic interpretation of the meaning of sex in building Type A behavioral patterns we anticipated differences in that regard in the experimental group.

#### 5. The results and discussion

**5.1.** For the whole group of students, the results of the JAS form are characterized by *negative* values and in all variables: the dynamics of behavior and impatience, job involvement, Type A behavioral pattern, involvement and rivalry.

**5.2.** With women, the results of the JAS form are also characterized by *negative* values in all variables included in the questionnaire, which is similar to the group as a whole.

**5.3.** Men's results, analogous to the results obtained by women, received *negative* values in all scales of the JAS questionnaire as well.

**5.4.** In Jenkins's method (JAS) Type A behavior is identified in cases of positive results. The aforementioned **negative results confirm the assumed hypothesis** about doubts pertaining to the presence of Type A behavior in the experimental group comprising students of martial arts and combat sports.

**5.5.** In the course of the study, we also constructed a model of regression with the dependent variable of Type A behavioral pattern, on the basis of three sub-scales of JAS: *speed and impatience (S-I)*, *job involvement (J-I)*, *involvement and rivalry (H-D)*. In the adopted model we demonstrated a correlation between the (S-I) and (H-D) sub-scales. In the former instance we obtained the value of  $t=5.34$  at  $p<0.00001$ ; in the latter  $t=4.09$  at  $p<0.0001$ . For the (J-I) sub-scale we detected no correlation. **The analysis confirms the appropriateness of the method, for which the indicated scales define the explained variable – Type A behavioral pattern – to a large extent.** The results of the (H-D) sub-scale were statistically analyzed and tested for difference using ANOVA in relation to sex, habitual residence and social background. For sex, the result was  $F(2.61)=1.33$ ,  $p=0.27$ , which indicates a lack of difference relating to sex. When analyzing the significance of habitual residence, we obtained the result:  $F(2.59)=0.59$ ,  $p=0.55$ , which also indicates a lack of difference pertaining to this variable. The analysis of the influence of social background yielded the following:  $F(4,59)=0.21$ ,  $p=0.92$ , which, as in other cases, did not alter the results in the sub-scales of engagements and rivalry.

**5.6.** The results confirm the hypothesis of the lack of Type A behavioral patterns in the experimental group of martial arts learners, students of the Internal security specialization. In accordance with the notions adopted during the conceptualization of research problems, **the stereotype attributing Type A behavioral patterns and personalities to martial arts students** [Wilson 1982;

Haines 1968] **was not confirmed.** This is connected to the ongoing changes in social consciousness in that regard and to the transforming expectations from those performing the discussed professional roles. Moreover, this situation is influenced by the widespread combat sports, which, in physical culture circles is associated with the notion of the noble way of the warrior and the psychological conception of the *liberated mind*, which has a Buddhist origin [Sohō 1988].

## 6. Conclusions and summary

**6.1.** The issue of methods of examining individual personalities in the context of their traits and characteristics is of great theoretical and practical importance, both in terms of physical and safety culture. The need for analyzes of desired personality and behavioral traits is also substantiated by the study of professional roles of uniformed forces officers. These are individuals who often act in circumstances where safety is threatened, therefore certain characteristics are viewed as useful and well-adjusted to the professional roles they play.

**6.2.** In the course of the research, it was initially assumed a socially and culturally determined stereotype, close to TABP and consistent with social expectations pertaining to the behavior and characteristics of members of uniformed forces, functioned in relation to the group of professionals dealing with security, comprised of martial arts students. The final results of the study allow to form a conclusion about the lack of corroboration of this stereotype in the experimental group. Individuals undertaking training programs toward a profession connected to ensuring security, which are interlaced with a holistic martial arts training [Ambroży 2006: 247-263; Piwowski, Ambroży 2012: 294-303] do not fall into the stereotypical TABP of a person who acts in an intensive manner, exhibits aggressive behavior, is impatient and overly competitive.

**6.3.** There are grounds to pose, during scientific analysis, important questions of adjustable vs. nonadjustable aspects of TABP. This is connected to the stereotypes and prejudices against the members of this profession [see: Nelson 2003]

**6.4.** Our interpretation also includes the issue of the meaning of the problems of values in the analysis of an individual's behavior. Exhibiting certain values (both implicit and explicit) connected to the questions of the meaning of life, health, subjectivity, openness, responsibility, honesty and honor, constitutes important apparatus that intensely modifies the individual's behavior in threatening situations [cf. Uchnast 1987]. This interpretation led to the conclusion that there was a need for undertaking research of the discussed professional contexts. Such research should relate to explicit and implicit values as well as attitudes. This is connected

with viewing values as relevant factors in regulating the behavior of an individual in challenging circumstances [cf. Strelau 2000].

The following conclusions from the study lead to the assessment of the actions undertaken during a martial arts training, touching on the problems of values. Accentuating the mental aspects of how a student of martial arts functions is a natural way of perceiving the way of the warrior. Let us cite the opinion of a judo master, Jazarin states: "Those who believe [combat sports] to be solely sports, and might and victory to be their only objective, are mistaken. The true victory is our liberation: total flexibility of spirit that directs an absolutely obedient body" [cf. Cody 2000].

In the conducted research we indicated the cultural determinants for acquiring and developing TABP. There is a need in Europe to conduct international research programs aimed at verifying the rank of this group of factors in developing an individual's traits. TABP was constructed in the USA where, for a time, it was considered a normative conviction that stimulated the need to function in this way. The indicated issues will also be important elements of the model of how an individual functions in a situation where safety is threatened – be it a martial arts student, or an officer of uniformed services trained for close combat. The underlying elements of mechanisms of adaptation and handling are values, attitudes and normative beliefs.

These actions should be relevant elements of education connected with both course of ethics, which provides abstractive basis for understanding the issue of values, and to martial arts training, which requires sensitivity toward axiological issues as an inalienable standard [cf. Piwowski 2011; 2012]. They are also a great opportunity to take up the issue of pro-social and altruistic behaviors, which is associated with the issue of heroism, important for martial art adepts in both theoretical and practical aspects. The problem of heroism is studied by Zimbardo, the author of the Stanford prison experiment [Zimbardo 2008]. In his book Zimbardo describes cruel human activities and indicates heroism, as a contrast, which is conditioned by the sphere of values and normative beliefs of an individual.

In such an interpretation, which refers to mechanisms of thinking, it is worth keeping in mind the empirically substantiated interpretation by Kahneman, who distinguishes fast and slow thinking [Kahneman 2012]. Fast are such acts, which are automatized, inaccessible in individual's insight mechanisms. Slow thinking concerns acts undertaken by an entity in an introspectively controlled way.

The problem of work with young adepts of martial arts, which is the subject of these deliberations, may be an attempt to widen the perspectives of perceiving, understanding and experiencing one's own functioning in both psychological and axiological aspects. The

authors of this research project consider undertaking such actions as a standard in contact with pupils during both courses of ethics, psychology, and management and martial art trainings. In this research project such procedures are understood as realization of the mission underlying functioning of the University, which is based on improvement and self-improvement of the student of school of security. The fundamental goal and effect of such actions should be to deepen insight in one's functioning and understand better the social influence, which is present in social relations [Cialdini 2007].

Along with conceptualization of the problem of values, patterns of behavior and normative beliefs, there is also a need of conducting international and intercultural research. Research in various cultural conditions shall reveal specificity of mechanisms of creating and functioning of the value system and prove their universality. An author, who touches the problem of significance of cultural conditioned behavior of an individual, points to the need of discovering one's own and other's alterity [Boski 2009]. Functioning in conditions of pluralism and globalism, typical for the twenty-first century, requires such an activity from people aware of their resources and open to experiencing a difference, but also similarity and analysis in activities of representatives of other cultures. Such a steered research may provide identification of more universal mechanisms of functioning of values and normative beliefs, which regulate behavior of an individual. The researches can also ease explanation and interpretation of creation of value system, and allow to understand better the influence of implicit and explicit values on behavior of an individual in both standard and extreme situations. They can also provide possibilities to distinguish clearly and interpret the final and the instrumental values. Comparison of the two contexts may serve to understand better differences and similarities in psychological and axiological mechanism's activity, which regulate behavior of an individual.

Conceptualization, which aims to order the way of understanding and interpreting basic concepts of values and normative beliefs is also desired.

From the psychological point of view for an individual important is increasing their own values [Rudnański 1975], however from the axiological one, important is that from time to time we have an opportunity to witness birth of an aristocrat. "[For] The modern knight is an aristocrat of spirit, a person, who seeks to knowledge, wisdom and higher values, a man, who obeys the noble rules of ethics..." [Cynarski 2009: 77].

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### Aksjologiczne, osobowościowe i behawioralne determinanty indywidualnych zachowań w sytuacji zagrożenia

**Słowa kluczowe:** kultura bezpieczeństwa, sztuki walki, securitologia, bezpieczeństwo, wartości, jednostki mundurowe

#### Abstrakt

Praca stanowi wynik projektu badawczego dotyczącego behawioralnych, aksjologicznych i indywidualistycznych wyznaczników zachowania jednostek w sytuacji zagrożenia. Autorzy posłużyli się kategorią Wzoru Zachowań „A”, która identyfikuje szereg zachowań i tym samym ułatwia opis i badanie jednostek pod kątem funkcjonowania w różnych kontekstach związanych z kulturą bezpieczeństwa. Jako metoda badania WZA wykorzystana została tzw. Skala Aktywności Jenkina (JAS), w ramach której wyróżnione na drodze analizy czynnikowej zostały trzy wymiary Wzoru Zachowań „A”, wyznaczające występujące w jego ramach charakterystyczne cechy: (1) H-D (*hard-driving, competitiveness*): zaangażowanie, sumiennosc, dążenie do rywalizacji, (2) S-I (*speed, impatience*): dynamika zachowania, sposób mówienia, skłonność do irytacji, niecierpliwość, (3) J-I (*job involvement*): stopień zaangażowania w sprawy zawodowe. Wskazane cechy stanowią jednocześnie stereotypowe wyznaczniki zachowania osób postrzeganych jako liderzy, a także osób związanych zawodowo z ochroną bezpieczeństwa.

Autorzy założyli, że badania ukażą przystosowawczy lub nieprzystosowawczy charakter WZA, który wynikałby z występujących w dużej mierze w ramach tego wzoru rysów intensywności zachowania. Postawili także ogólne pytanie dotyczące roli WZA w zachowaniu jednostki w sytuacji zagrożenia. Podstawą dla badań było jednocześnie pragnienie naukowej weryfikacji stereotypu dotyczącego osobowości i zachowań funkcjonariuszy służb mundurowych.

Grupę uczestników badań stanowili studenci obojga płci szkoleni w zakresie sportów i metod walki. Wypełniali oni kwestionariusz JAS służący identyfikowaniu Wzoru Zachowań „A”, a uzyskane wyniki rozszerzono o dane demograficzne. Pytanie badawcze dotyczyło także wagi różnych zmiennych i ich wpływu na zachowanie jednostki w sytuacji zagrożenia. Autorzy, odwołując się do stereotypów funkcjonujących w świadomości zbiorowej i wyznaczających oczekiwania wobec zachowania przedstawicieli służb mundurowych, osób kształconych w zakresie sportów walki i zawodowo związanych z bezpieczeństwem, założyli możliwość zaniku owej tendencji w sposobie działania funkcjonariuszy, związaną ze zmianą społecznych oczekiwań.

Uzyskano ujemne wyniki badań dla przedstawicieli obu płci w zakresie wszystkich analizowanych zmiennych, co dowiodło zasadności wysuwanych przez autorów wątpliwości dotyczących występowania WZA u adeptów sztuk walki.

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