

THE PHILOSOPHY OF KARATE IN TERMS OF THE DOJO-KUN AND THE NIJU-KUN ON THE EXAMPLE OF STYLE SHOTOKAN

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Introduction

While studying the martial art relationship between the philosophical and mental aspects of art is inevitable. It grows along with the use of the selected art. It is mutual. It is reinforced and developed. The result can be a philosophy of life, for which training is essential. The real karate (the literal translation of karate – the way of the empty hand) is not indicating who is better and who is worse. The karate is a method of self-defense, in which there are not used other weapons outside own body. Systematic training of arms and legs means that they can repel any attack with equal efficiency using real weapon¹. In the end, the karate is a martial art serving the character's development by training in such way that karateka would be able to overcome every obstacle, regardless of its character².

The philosophy of karate is based on knowledge of Okinawan masters of martial arts and close links between the physical and mental aspects of this art, which are derived from Budo (martial way)³. The philosophy of karate can have a huge impact on the daily life of an individual. Each variety of karate specifies the ethical rules. They differ in details, but maintain a certain standard canon, resulting from a common core of the East Asian culture⁴. In the shotokan style are two codes described by Gichin Funakoshi. They are pillars of shotokan style. The first is the dojo-kun – it is the etiquette of the place of exercise. It is in the physical and physical sense a place where someone follows up the way⁵. Dojo kun has been described in five rules. It is a set of principles and rights that everyone who wants to learn the art of karate must absorb. Rules of the dojo kun are:

- seek perfection of character,
- be faithful,
- endeavor,
- respect others,
- refrain from violent behaviour⁶.

The second code is niju-kun. It is twenty principles of the karate's spirit. This etiquette of karate is a kind of complement to and extension of the dojo-kun's thought in the style of shotokan. The rules are:

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¹ K. Witkowski, *Z systemów walk Dalekiego Wschodu*, Akademia Wychowania Fizycznego we Wrocławiu, Wrocław 1993.

² R. Habersetzer, *Karate pratique: du débutant à la ceinture noire. Encyclopedie des arts martiaux*, Amphora, Paris 2003.

³ B. D. Clayton, *Shotokan's Secret: The hidden truth behind Karate's fighting origins*, Black Belt Books, Burbank (California), 2004.

⁴ H. Cook, *Shotokan Karate: A Precise History*, Cook, England 2001.

⁵ G. Beghetto, *The new encyclopedia of karate-do: tome 1*, Columbus, Szczecin 2011.

⁶ G. Funakoshi, *The Essence of Karate*, Kodansha International, Tokyo 2010.

- karate begins and ends with bowing,
- there is no first strike in karate,
- karate stands on the side of justice,
- first know yourself, then know others,
- mentality over technique,
- the heart must be set free,
- calamity springs from carelessness,
- karate goes beyond the dojo,
- karate is a lifelong pursuit,
- apply the way of karate to all things – therein lies its beauty,
- karate is like boiling water – without heat, it returns to its tepid state,
- do not think of winning – think, rather, of not losing,
- make adjustments according to your opponent,
- the outcome of a battle depends on how one handles emptiness and fullness (weakness and strength),
- think of hands and feet as swords,
- when you step beyond your own gate, you face a million enemies,
- formal stances are for beginners, later, one stands naturally,
- perform prescribed sets of techniques exactly – actual combat is another matter,
- do not forget the employment of withdrawal of power, the extension or contraction of the body, the swift or leisurely application of technique;
- be constantly mindful, diligent, and resourceful, in your pursuit of the way⁷.

Aim, material and methods

The aim of the study is to analyze the principles of the dojo-kun and niju-kun. Studies have been used the following methods: analysis of the sources, induction, deduction, synthesis and comparative.

We put forward the following research problem: understanding the philosophy of karate in terms dojo-kun and niju-kun in educational value on the example of style shotokan. The results are presented in the form of source texts.

Results

Dojo kun

It can be easily noticed that the rules of the dojo kun do not have specific numbers. It means that there is no guiding principle in the dojo etiquette. All the principles are just as important and assigned a dominant role in karate.

“Seek perfection of character” – the assumption is the character of the individual. It means that the art of karate is more than just physical. All beginners, especially the young, should be taught the importance of building character through discipline and rigorous training. For the beginner, the process of building character begins with perfecting techniques through repetition. The fighting spirit will be achieved by gaining greater confidence through

⁷ G. Funakoshi, *The Twenty Guiding Principles of Karate: The Spiritual Legacy of the Master*, Kodansha International, Tokyo 1994.

the development of stronger techniques. The disciple must train in order to capture the spirit. It applies not only to fight, but also overcoming personal problems, particularly increasing nowadays – weakness, domestic crises or problems in business. To develop these spiritual values is a long path, provided that the concept is understood and it is an experience that will provide a lifetime benefit of inner strength and peace.

“Be faithful” – the premise is the loyalty. Being faithful is a strong samurai tradition and an extension of the influence of Confucius on the family and martial arts. Faith is visualized in the master and the dojo. The disciple must always be faithful to his master and try to follow the same path. Just as medieval samurai were obliged to follow their feudal lords, until his death, and without hesitation. It may seem unusual in the present day to expect from the master to pass all his knowledge to a student who will probably leave with the slightest reason. The student must over the years prove his loyalty. The faith and loyalty shown to the master will be rewarded, thus, that a great amount of knowledge and wisdom will pass on the student. This bond between the master and the disciple is extremely valuable and it is the basis to learn the relationship.

“Endeavor” – it is based on the effort. The quest is full dedication and commitment necessary to achieve mastery of the art. In any case, the championship is not possible without the effort and dedication on the part of the participant. The desire must be sincere nature and not just superficial. Serious desire on the side of the disciple will surely be recognized by the master who devotes more time to the transfer of knowledge.

“Respect others” – the assumption is the etiquette. Respect for others is an important part of the Japanese and Okinawan culture which is common to the martial arts. Gichin Funakoshi always said that karate begins and ends by the etiquette. He also established that without courtesy there is no dojo. It is a reflection of the formal nature of the Japanese people who can be seen bowing both during training and at home or in the office. The dojo’s etiquette is well defined. Bowing correctly, it turns out respect in all things what someone’s doing, and wherever it is located. Respect should be shown to all: masters, parents, educators, law, deceased, nature, etc.

“Refrain from violent behavior” – the determinant is the control. A trained fighter is a person with a fierce competitive spirit and great strength. It is unfair to use it against untrained person. The spirit of karate is hard to beat. The karateka must use his knowledge, only for reasons of justice. A person of character can walk away from a fight because he controls his emotions and he is at peace with himself. He does not have to test his abilities on the street. He wins without a fight and he will not regret because no one gets hurt. Refraining from violent behavior is difficult to explain to many trainees because of their environment or willingness to sportsmanship.

Niju-kun

Twenty principles of karate is the external manifestation of the accepted scale of values, the image of the desired behavior demands. The karateka should control both the survival and external manifestation of emotion. He should not show anger or fear, triumph and pain, contempt or admiration. The only thing allowed to show is respect for own partner expressed in a dignity and strict adherence to the etiquette. The karateka is not, in fact, called to assess other – he has to be only specialist in strict assessment of himself. Proper attitude is based on far-reaching understanding of others and extreme rigor against himself.

The niju-kun determines the rules of behavior that, on the one hand, are a part of the general culture of behavior and good manners, on the other hand, they are closely connected with the tradition of bushido, budo and they are subordinated to this tradition. These rules equally apply to all athletes. Everyone, regardless of hierarchy or their position, should seek their own perfection. In addition, niju-kun insists on the principle of non-using the violence because of the destructive techniques of karate. Whenever it is possible, the physical confrontation should be avoided. There are two additional reasons for supporting the principle of non-using the violence. The first – the karateka is confident of his ability. He knows he has more chance to carry out an effective defense than the average person, thus, he does not need to prove it, if it is possible to avoid the confrontation. The second – the physical confrontation indicates that all reasonable measures to solve the problem have failed. Engaging in a physical confrontation deprives humanity – it shows that the reason and intelligence have been lost.

Philosophical aspect of the dojo-kun and niju-kun is manifested not only on respect for moral norms but it applies, in particular, to self-control and emotional zone. The relationship between language and emotion is very clear, and thoughts are often saturated with feelings. Thus, disclosed here is a fact that there are inextricable links between culture, psychology and sociology.

Discussion

In formulating mentioned comments, G. Funakoshi wanted to convey disciples how to understand the karate – it is more than a physical art, it's also a philosophy of life⁸. The philosophy of karate is a huge set of principles, truths and ways to deeper exploration of the human consciousness⁹. Even if the opponent is trying to hurt the contestant badly, the contestant is lucky to have met him. To know himself, get to know the enemy and to understand the mutual relation – it is the main goal of practicing karate¹⁰. The philosophy of karate assumes that knowing their own weaknesses and overcoming them is the surest way to raise all own skills to a higher level – it also concerns fighting skills. The opponent can not be beaten by someone who still has problems with his own body and spirit¹¹.

Therefore, training karate, according to S. Egami, first toughens the body. Then comes the time for hardening spirit. In the end, it comes understanding that the spirit and body are one. And therein lies the real training karate¹². If the spirit is weak, the is poor also the body, no matter how it's built. If the spirit is strong, the body is also strong. J. Miłkowski found that the philosophical environment of karate should also be ceremonial behavior during classes and fighting tournament. Regardless of experienced feelings, before the fight and during it, the contestant should perform the ceremonial bows. He should also behave with dignity¹³.

According to W. Cynarski, adherence to the principles of discipline and respect, the respect for authority of the master and the hierarchy, the full commitment to the training and long-term, hard work is the key to the destination of spiritual mastery. The path of kyu

⁸ J. Stevens, *Three Budo Masters: Kano, Funakoshi, Ueshiba*, Kodansha International, Tokio 1995.

⁹ P. Urban, *The Karate Dojo: Traditions and tales of a martial art.*, Tuttle, Tokyo 1991.

¹⁰ S. Egami, *The Heart of Karate*, Kodansha International, Tokyo 2000.

¹¹ J. Miłkowski, *Sztuki i sporty walki dalekiego wschodu*, Sport i Turystyka, Warszawa 1987.

¹² S. Egami, *The Way of Karate: Beyond technique*, Kodansha International, Tokyo 1976.

¹³ J. Miłkowski, *Encyklopedia sztuk walki*, Algo, Toruń, 2009.

degrees of disciple ensures the gradual maturation of the technical mastery. It is a traditional form of progressive development, specific for Budo, that the most important aim is to achieve spiritual mastery and full psychophysical integration¹⁴.

Undertaking the sports rivarly is intentional as a step of the life's way of Budo and justified as a test of fitness of the physical, technical, tactical and psychological resistance. Optimal is a direct contact with the master, as a part of training^{15, 16}. Then Budo is the authentic school of character, educating socially valuable individuals. It can be stated: a significant beneficial influence of education, a large increase in real self-defense, a high physical and physical fitness, increasing interest in the culture of the Far East and a physical culture^{17, 18}. Especially valuable are direct forms of transmission of knowledge and skills from the master to the disciple that favors the internalisation and solidification the moral principles, the adoption of master's lifestyle and the spiritual growth alongside the personal pattern^{19, 20}.

It should be noted that the potential comes from the form of man and of his mind. The function is the result of the energy on the outside, through movement and fighting technique²¹. The human potential is not constant. It increases due to the work of the mind. If the movements are performed with great freedom, which goes beyond mere reflexes, we can talk about the emergence of higher-level functions^{22, 23}. This is a result of excellent work of the mind. If the mind is not working on potential, this higher level does not reveal. The essence of these arguments lies in the fact that the more perfected is the work of the mind while practicing karate, the greater becomes our potential^{24, 25}. The status of internal integration and a sense of bond with nature enhance the mental power of the practitioner given martial art or sport fighting^{26, 27}. While the man derives from the rich heritage of tradition and philosophy of martial arts of the Far East, he can become not only a great warrior but – due perfecting his personality – getting better in his humanity. Sport, as a stage in the CV, has an end, and the improvement through the practice of martial arts can be a path of self-improvement and self-realization of a lifetime – in accordance with the canons of pedagogy and psychology.

¹⁴ W. Cynarski, *Recepcja i internalizacja etosu dalekowschodnich sztuk walki przez osoby ćwiczące*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Rzeszowskiego, Rzeszów, 2006.

¹⁵ D. F. Draeger, *Modern Bujutsu & Budo: Martial Arts And Ways Of Japan, Vol. III*, Weatherhill 2007.

¹⁶ A. Forster, *Neue perspektiven fur den sport durch philosophie und praxis der fernostlichen kampfkunste*, [w:] *Aktuelle probleme der spoertphilosophie*, (red.) H. Lenk, K. Hoffmann, Schorndorf 1983, s. 211-240.

¹⁷ M. Nakayama, *Best Karate Series*, Kodansha International, Tokyo 2012.

¹⁸ M. Nakayama, *Dynamic karate*, Kodansha International, Tokyo 2012.

¹⁹ H. Nishiyama, *Traditional Karate Coach's Manual*, International Traditional Karate Federation, Los Angeles 1989.

²⁰ H. Nishiyama, R. C. Brown, *Karate: The Art of Empty-Hand Fighting*, Tuttle, Tokyo 2001.

²¹ A. O. Seba, F. T. Baena, J. N. Mouchet, *Combate supremo*, Angel Delgado Pozo, Tarragona 2002.

²² G. Funakoshi, *Karate Jutsu: The Original Teachings of Master Funakoshi*, Kodansha International, Tokyo 2001.

²³ G. Funakoshi, *Karate: My Way of Life*, Kodansha International, Tokyo 2010.

²⁴ G. Funakoshi, *Karate Nyumon: The Master Introductory Text*, Kodansha International, Tokyo 1994.

²⁵ G. Funakoshi, *Karate Kyohan: The Master Text*, Kodansha International, Tokyo 2001.

²⁶ M. Nakayama, D. F. Draeger, *Practical Karate: A guide to everyman's self-defense*, Tuttle, Tokyo 2009.

²⁷ M. Nakayama, D. F. Draeger, *Practical Karate: Defense against an unarmed assailant*, Tuttle, Tokyo 2009.

Conclusion

The philosophy of karate is an effective educational method. For warped individuals, there is no place in karate. Adept who wishes to attend classes, or adapts, accepts the rules of etiquette dojo-kun, niju kun and by competing with himself in training will go a process of rehabilitation, or simply gives up karate classes. Trainee easily recognizes the authority of the coach. It gives great opportunities to pull them away from the present youth culture bad patterns: alcoholism, drug addiction, sects and subcultures. Based on the universal values that carries a martial art of karate, it has been achieved the objectives of education among young people and it works for the general good of all exercisers. All elements of psychophysical karate, bushido knowledge transfer and education in the spirit of Budo, attitudes and values, as well as etiquette and symbols adopted by practitioners of karate, form a kind of culture – the culture of karate.

The culture of karate has a positive effect on physical and mental sphere trainees. For its special features stand out the specific psychosocial climate – a system of hierarchy of kyu and dan degrees, emotional approach to training, discipline, respect for authority and traditional values, codes of ethics, terminology, philosophy, hygiene indications, meditation exercises and high physical fitness of exercisers. People from the area of karate culture treat practicing karate as a method of self-realization. The overall objective is to develop and improve their lives by continuous spiritual and physical-improvement. They are characterized by their hard work, perseverance and consistency in the pursuit of success, respect for moral norms, self-control and mental strength. People practicing karate take both physical and mental benefits, arising from their participation in the culture of karate. These include the development of psychomotor skills, learning self-defense skills, sportsmanship, health training, mental and autogenous relaxation.

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Summary

Background and Study Aim: The philosophy of karate can have a huge impact on the daily life of an individual. In the shotokan karate are two codes: the dojo-kun and the niyu-kun. They form the pillars of the philosophy of this martial art. **Material and methods:** The aim of the study is to analyze the principles of the dojo-kun and niyu-kun. The analysis of data is conducted. The results are presented in the form of source texts – understanding the dojo-kun and niyu-kun in the perspective of different authors. **Results:** Philosophical aspect of the dojo-kun and the niyu-kun is manifested not only on respect for moral norms but it also applies in particular to self-control and emotional zone. The relationship between language and emotion is very clear, and thoughts are often saturated with feelings. Thus, disclosed herein is a fact that there are inextricable links between culture, psychology and sociology. **Conclusions:** All elements of the psychophysical karate form a kind of culture – the culture of karate. People from the area of the culture of karate treat practicing karate as a method of self-realization. Their overall objective is to develop and improve their lives by continuous spiritual and physical-improvement.

Keywords: karate, philosophy, ethics, dojo-kun, niyu-kun, shotokan, culture.

FILOZOFIA KARATE W UJĘCIU DOJO-KUN I NIJU-KUN NA PRZYKŁADZIE STYLU SHOTOKAN

Streszczenie

Tło i cel: Filozofia karate ma duży wpływ na życie trenujących karate. W stylu shotokan wyróżniamy dwa kodeksy: dojo-kun i niyu-kun. Stanowią one podstawę filozofii tej sztuki walki. Celem badania była analiza zasad dojo-kun i niyu-kun. **Material i metody:** Dokonano analizy tekstów źródłowych - rozumienie dojo-kun i niyu-kun z perspektywy różnych autorów. **Wyniki:** Filozoficzne aspekty dojo-kun i niyu-kun przejawiają się nie tylko w odniesieniu do norm moralnych, ale również mają zastosowanie w samokontroli i sferze emocjonalnej jednostki. Zależność między językiem i emocjami są bardzo czytelne. Przemyślenia są często nasycone uczuciami. Ujawnia się fakt o skomplikowanych powiązaniach między kulturą, psychologią i socjologią. **Wnioski:** Wszystkie psychofizyczne elementy karate tworzą pewien rodzaj kultury – kulturę karate. Ludzie ze sfery kultury karate traktują trenowanie karate jako metodę samorealizacji. Celem nadrzędnym jest rozwój i poprawa swojego życia przez duchowe i fizyczne doskonalenie.

Słowa kluczowe: karate, filozofia, etyka, dojo-kun, niyu-kun, shotokan, kultura.