



私の好きな本・音楽・スポーツ

MY FAVORITE BOOKS, MUSIC AND SPORTS



空手の魅力

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2, 3 年前、私の生徒たちに近くの空手道場に誘われた。着くとすぐに、着替えもせずに空手をしてみよう言われた。Ok!何年か前にやったことがある武道と白帯を思い出したが、空手は初めてだ。僕は子供の頃シカゴのちょっと危険な南地区で育ったので、始終けんかや不良仲間の争いがあり、それを公平に扱うことに苦慮していた。その時、テコンドーをやってみよう促された。テコンドーのハイキックはかっこよかったが、高校で始めた「空手」には比べようがなかった。空手の研ぎ澄まされた型や、パワーに驚愕し、武芸と言えば日本人、ということを知らなかったのを認めざるを得なかった。実際、普通のアメリカ人は「空手」と中国でよく知られている「カンフー」を混同している。あなたはどうですか。



KARATE

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A couple of years ago in Saitama, I was invited by my students and their parents to see their Karate class at the neighborhood dojo. I was soon asked to spar in my cardigan sweater and dress-slacks, zugeeree bu I soon began to remember my old martial arts skills and a certain white belt from years ago, brand new to the martial art of Karate: me. Growing up on the dangerous South Side of Chicago, I had suffered my fair share of fights and gang beatings, prompting me to try Taekwondo. It was very pretty, with its high kicks, but it didn't compare to Karate, which I began my first year of high school. I was amazed at the solid form and power of the style, and admit that I had no idea that the art was Japanese. In fact, the average American still confuses Karate with *Kung-fu*, a Chinese family of martial arts. What about you?

Karate, 空手, meaning "empty hand", is a striking art that was originally developed from the indigenous styles of the Ryukyu Islands, modern day Okinawa, Japan. When international trade relations improved in the Ming Dynasty, many Chinese immigrants brought Chinese styles to Ryukyu. These new arts birthed in the land of Ryukyu, called *te* (hand), were blended together in the cauldron of multi-cultural Okinawan culture until Karate was born. The early styles, *Shuri-te*, *Naha-te* and *Tomari-te*, were named after the regions that they were developed in, a common practice as no one method existed yet and everyone followed their own guidelines. However, what we know as modern Karate continued to take shape through the efforts of masters like Sakukawa Kanga (1782-1838). Sakukawa brought back a mix of pugilism and bo-staff fighting from China, adding it to the already bubbling mix of early Karate. He, and later successors like *Itosu Anko*, helped to create *Shorin-ryu* Karate, a style that is one of the oldest. Eventually the art came to mainland Japan as *Karate-do* (do, 道, meaning "way"), adding a more philosophical aspect to the art as a path to self understanding.

「空手」は琉球（現在の沖縄）で発祥した打撃技の武道である。中国の明の時代に中国人が様々な文化を琉球に持ち込み、それが自生のもとのまじりあい、「空手」が生まれた。今我々が知っている「空手」は佐久川寛賀のような師の努力による。彼は中国から中国武術を持ち帰りこれに初期の空手を加えた。彼や糸州安恒によって少林流空手がつくられ、結果としてそれが本土に渡り、更に哲学的な局面も加味されるようになった。

「空手」が戦うスポーツであろうと自衛のスポーツであろうと、核となる原理はおなじであり、人はいろいろなやり方でそれを楽しんでいる。私自身についていえば、闘争的なものと、合気道を取り入れた自衛を重視の型が混合した空手を習った。この技術は試合でも認められている。空手家はまず「基本」という技を取得する。調和を持った技術訓練であり、防御と攻撃を代表する一連の動きを学ぶ。その中で強さと器用さを作る、腕立て伏せ、特定のけりのような体力の訓練をする。次に「組手」は字のごとく、手を合わせることで、実際に相対して練習する。最後の「型」は完全なる戦いの方法で、複数の敵を想定し、ポーズを記憶し実行する。「空手」は単純なものから超複雑なものまでさまざまなスタイルがある。普通「型」がより上級になればなるほど、古いオリジナルのスタイルにおける技のピークがより上昇する。私の一番好きな「組手」は元来、相手との監視付きの試合の中で、以前の練習を復習するのに使っていた。この試合は軽いパンチやキック、言い換えれば極真流のような顔や胸への直の打撃は厳しく管理されていた。

Whether as an art (*budo* 武道), sport/combat sport or self defense, Karate can be enjoyed in many ways, though the core elements of a regiment are similar. I myself learned a hybrid style that was more combat sport and self-defense oriented, with a little Aikido thrown in, yet our techniques were recognized by others in tournaments. The *Karate-ka* (practitioner) is expected to participate in Kihon, technique drills done in unison, learn *Kata*, a formalized series of movements representing offensive and defensive maneuvers, and *Kumite*, or sparring, literally "meeting of hands". Kihon can focus on physical exercises like pushups or a particular kick, intending to build strength, dexterity and hand eye coordination. *Kata*, is a complete fighting system, memorized and carried out with attention to posture in order to train for engaging multiple attackers. There are many katas spread out over the various Karate styles ranging from simple to extremely difficult, and usually the more advanced the kata, the greater a peak you're getting at the style's old origins. *Kumite*, a favorite of mine, was basically using all that you learned in the previous drills in a monitored fight with another *Karate-ka*. These fights could be strictly controlled by the *sensei*, teacher, or *shihan*, master, with light punches and kicks or in case of styles like *Kyokushin*, full-contact strikes to the face and chest.

あなたが日本人でも、ビジターでも空手道場を遠くで探す必要はない。周りを見回せば地元の人たちが通うすばらしい道場を見つけられる。きっとカーデガンやスラックスのままでやってみることも厭わないでしょう。

If you are a native of Japan or are visiting the country, you don't have to look far for a Karate dojo. Ask around and you'll most likely find one that the locals hold in high regard. Only make sure you're ready and willing with more than just a cardigan and dress slacks.

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