

A brief history of traditional Budo Japanese Karate in Europe and the World or formation of the world traditional karate union

On December 15, 2019, in Warsaw, something that could not have been assumed decades ago, let alone realized – in fact happened.

Is it a coincidence that such a decade-long event was delayed for various reasons!!! Or not?! At this moment, it does not even matter.

Just imagine going back a few years, and you will see separate numerous federations of traditional karate, which, as a rule, fought very harshly and uncompromisingly, opposing each other for the primacy and legacy of traditional Japanese karate, at the moment when the patriarchs, i.e. the first people of traditional karate, one by one, left by God's will, leaving the beheaded second generation to fight out for position, primacy and affirmation. Lost, without the much needed true leader, they were left to the mercy of people who were guided, above all, by selfish interests, and who were anything but true karatekas that belonged to Sensei Nishiyama's work.

In recent years, radical changes have taken place in the world that are bringing to the world karate stage brand new, almost unimaginable content in the form of unique joint platforms of both national and international organizations.

Much earlier, there was the WKF sports platform, and then there was the Okinawan Karate Platform in 2019, both of which have been seen as forms of new quality of sports organization and culturally sociological and extremely serious institutions, which in the current primacy match impose themselves in leadership as well as in the appropriation and winning over as many of 200 million members of the world karate population as possible.

Truth be told, in the last decade, there have been sporadic attempts on all continents of various forms, symbioses, associations of organizations that somewhat made sense, but also, at times, of extremely incomprehensible, meaningless, unreasonable and illogical forms.

There was only one goal, mass attendance, and it was closely related to commercialization, which is a very popular form of ubiquitous karate today. No matter how you define karate, whether as the skill of the art of fighting or as a sport, such tendencies are unfortunately present to a greater or lesser extent.

The nursery of Japanese Karate JKA has more than certainly led to the widespread presence of karate. In the first so-called development phase, karate was distinctive, which led to the formation of the unique world organization WUKO in Tokyo in 1970. Not long after, human vanity, personal affirmation, mentality and desire for dominance of one teacher over another, one style over another, one organization over another, brought karate to the second phase, the so-called phase of multiplication, separation, i.e. the creation of hundreds of federations, associations, confederations. They all equally deny validity, originality and truthfulness to one another. The Okinawan styles follow the tendencies of development of Japanese Budo karate and with the right of heritage, origin, sources of many forms of styles, while at the same time lagging behind Japanese Budo karate forms, with extremely aggressive policy, above all, of relinquishing the right to originality and specificity, round off the race. It is rather confrontation with Japanese Budo karate forms, with the proclamation of the Okinawan platform in 2019 - or unification of all forms of karate, with each individual entity retaining all its specificity, making Okinawa seen as Mecca, Medina, Jerusalem and all together when it comes to karate, which is an absolute historical truth.

ITKF, formed as a protector, a defender of the traditional, most importantly, of Japanese Budo Karate, in its existence resists the new tendencies of the Okinawan Karate, namely until the death of one of its key founders Sensei Hidetaka Nishiyama, in addition to Prof. Vladimir Jorga, MD PhD, and Mrs. Aiko San. In order to survive, ITKF incorporates the following styles inherited from Okinawa: Goju ryu under the leadership of Sensei Kisaka, Shito ryu under the leadership of Sensei Mabuni, Shorin kenpo ryu under the leadership of Sensei Richard Kim and the only Japanese style Sensei Funakoshi, i.e. the team Sensei Nakayama and Sensei Nishiyama - Shotokan. We must admit that that was the first successful form of unification of Japanese forms and styles of karate.

ITKF, whether we want to admit it or not, is sports-oriented with due respect for tradition. During the life of Sensei Nishiyama, traditional karate was maintained and to some degree counteracted unobtrusive actors like WKF, with an enormous appetite and a desire to take on world primacy. The conflict between WKF and ITKF was all but a fair-play confrontation, especially since the WKF leaders did not even hesitate to disallow the ITKF organization.

With the death of Sensei Nishiyama, a silent but imminent clash of self-proclaimed heirs emerges. The most senior associate and one of the founders of Sensei Nishiyama's ITKF is certainly Prof. Vladimir Jorga, who has been staying on the sidelines since the increasing and omnipresent conflict of the two pretenders to the throne, Mr. Jorgensen and Mr. Kwiechinskie. In the first stage of Prof. Vladimir Jorga's exclusion from the game, united interests, with a desire in self-worth, are declared as the so-called "heirs" of the great teacher. Fighting for primacy, they enter an unstoppable uncompromising conflict "out of love". This conflict and these people are to blame for the decline of the ITKF as well as its collapse from within. At the place of dying ITKF, new organizations are born in reaction to the strife in the ITKF.

The united interest, more precisely – relationship with benefits, which resulted in the cleanup and removal of every individual who is not in the same sphere of interest, did not last long. The Jorgensen-Kwiechinskie split and open conflict grew into a merciless war, for reasons of not acknowledging and denying primacy-leadership, both being convinced that they were Messiahs who would save ITKF from the downfall. Obsessed with their ego, they practically degrade and devalue the work of Sensei Nishiyama. At the moment Mr. Jorgensen took over ITKF (under very doubtful circumstances) new organizations emerged, namely:

WFF – World Fudokan Federation which Mr. Jorgensen (aware of the danger borne by the WFF) right away portrayed as just a style organization at ITKF recognized by Sensei Nishiyama, which is absolutely true! WFF, an evolutionary style organization, has grown into a worldwide organization, and in the world of traditional karate, by number of national federations, it is a member of the top four world karate organizations. WFF is joined by the newly formed WTKF, based in Switzerland, as a reaction to Jorgensen's actions. However, the difficult journey continued, and after the turmoil, exit and separation of the largest number of members, the WTKF removed (without looking for reasons) Mr. Kwiechinskie. The newly assembled WTKF, after getting stabilized and put into order, is taken over and diverted by young uncompromisable and honorable people, Mr. Radek Janos and Mr. Andrzej Maciejewski, and at the same time the center gets moved to Poland. New affiliated platform actors are ETKF and Budo karate.

Recognizing that the issue of the existence of traditional karate is, first and foremost, in the possible altering of ITKF (which proved unrealistic and impossible because of Mr. Jorgensen's usual deliberate obstructions), the WFF makes the first, truly historic step. With the adoption of the Belgrade Declaration in 2012, as well as the complement, the Berlin Declaration in 2016, it was decided to offer the concept of the platform to representatives of traditional karate.

The intent was to preserve the work of Sensei Nishiyama, so that the traditional karate would not merge with the WKF and become completely lost, but they had to keep in mind the mentality of the Japanese karate leaders who behaved by the rule "each to their own," with their egocentric imitation of historically forgotten shoguns. They showed disrespect for the other, whether he was of the same or higher rank, while invoking the philanthropy, morality and ethics of the Bushido code. It is easy to recognize that these are categories of Nitobe's romantic medieval warriors, descriptions and excessive admiration of the samurai. The first generation of Japanese instructors fulfilled their lives in Europe and the world primarily through true karate presentation, but later on through growing advertising and nurturing their own greatness, as well as their understanding and interpretation of karate. That phase of identifying hundreds of thousands of people ended with the increasing maturity of the so-called second generation, which practically became competitive and fought for its place in the Sun. Relationship Sensei - kohai / teacher - student rarely, in the true sense, represents a relationship that holds a special place in Budo culture.

We do not need to look further, the best example is JKA, because with the death of Sensei Nakayama it got crushed, and every even slightly higher rank - DAN, went out into the world and formed its own federation and style. All other organizations and first-generation teachers are not far behind the fate of the JKA. You will say, well, it's a SHU-HA-RI education system that entitles an individual to impose themselves at any cost. And where is the ethics, morality, honesty and philanthropy that Mr. Nitobe so passionately writes about?! Aware of the seriousness of the problem as well as the fate of the institutions, namely the emergence of a number of styles and organizations, the second generation opts for the opposite process, uniting the organizations by forming the aforementioned platforms.

All of this required great energy, the simultaneous vision of the united federations, that is, the obsessive power of the group of enthusiasts to secure the survival of the art of fighting, Budo culture, through the act of merging, i.e. to secure the survival of Budo karate through Japanese Budo skills.

On November 15, 2019, during the 8th Fudokan World Championships in Stuttgart, representatives of four World Traditional Karate Federations, namely: WFF, WTKF, ETKF and WBKA, signed a letter of intent to establish a common platform of traditional karate. It was agreed that each founder shall retain its structure, systems of competition, refereeing, evaluation, mutual respect and assistance in the process of symbiosis of the organization.

The name of the united federation is WTKU - World Traditional Karate Union. The goal and task are clearly formulated. The structure of WTKU implies the full independence of the members, which means the right to organize their own continental as well as world competitions. WTKU reserves the right to organize the so-called Karate Olympics every 4 years, where karatekes compete in common (same) disciplines of the founding members: WFF, WTKF, ETKF and WBKA. The rules are identical, with certain accepted amendments. The platform, as it is designed, does not go deeper into the sphere of interest of every member (federation) that has joined it, but it places particular emphasis on the aspects that make up traditional karate, which are above all: morality, ethics, behavior, all in accordance with the wishes of Mr. Nitobe, Sensei Nishiyama and other greats, most notably the all-important and indispensable great, the teacher Gichin Funakoshi.

Rightly, the question arises:

How will many larger or smaller global Japanese organizations, which have their leaders, react when it comes to traditional karate and what will they do?

Let us immediately clear the evidently present truth, which is that their assessment approach was based on the belief that they were hosts, but today karate is not exclusively the cultural heritage of Japan, it is a world heritage. It is part of the culture of many countries and people all over the world. It is not them who are problem, but the other ones who pretend to be more Japanese than the Japanese themselves or as the old saying would put it "more Catholic than Pope". So these are the ones who disturb the association by jumping to the fore, and even if they wanted to join the inevitable association, they neither could, nor wanted to because of their patrons. I expect and hope that current leaders

will understand the necessity and importance of unifying the Japanese Budo karate that is present in various forms in Europe and in the World.

We believe we are not wrong, because obviously the WKF and Okinawan platforms are good events that have a very positive effect, especially since our platform refers to a separate part and we do not see the WKF or the Okinawan platform as competition or, worse, as a setback, and vice versa. Karate culture is so diverse and rich. Our goal and task is only to unite the Japanese Budo karate, classical and evolutionary forms, because this is the true meaning of the teachings of the great teacher Gichin Funkoshi who spoke, taught, showed and firmly believed that: "Karate is one, there are different ways of reaching ".