

TO KNOW IS TO BE: TO BE IS TO SEE: TO SEE IS TO KNOW
HOW THEN, CAN YOU ? ? ? ? ?

The FIRST is what is.

The SECOND is what is done.

The THIRD is who sees that it is done, since the existence or the self only comes when the self conceives the existence of non-existence or action.

INTRODUCTION TO THE KWAN MU HYUNG

After a hard session of sparring, students often comment that they have such a good feeling after fighting and that form practice is dull and uninteresting. They insist that fighting is the best kind of training as it leaves them both mentally and physically clean.

A strong and unusual case may be presented on behalf of the formal exercise.

It may be considered that each individual consciousness is a center of concentration in a field of awareness. The mind depends on, and serves this consciousness and the body depends on, and serves the mind. In Karate, the mind and body are unified and work as one. Three primary barriers can impede these actions; stress, apprehension, and anxiety.

Here we will consider stress as the inappropriate physical reaction to stimuli. For example, a man is talking on the telephone and the conversation heats up. His blood clotting mechanism accelerates, his adrenal secretions speed up, and all the systems that can help him survive in a life and death, blood and gore struggle start to function, and there he is on the telephone, a truly inappropriate stress reaction.

Apprehension in this lecture is used in the sense of fear or worry about the result of an action. The fear of consequence takes the mind forward and does not permit real concentration. If you knew you would die a miserable death tomorrow, could you calmly study now?

We will use anxiety as the fear of being alone, of not belonging to, or of being cast out from the group. If a man is with his girlfriend, for example, he must react to insults in a "manly" fashion or be thought of as less than a man.

During the practice sparring, the fighter's body prepares itself to fight and that is what it does. No bad stress response here. The body does what it is set up to do. The fighter is into the action; there is no time for apprehension. He is performing well and his acceptance is assured.

For this moment he is functioning as an effective ensemble with no mental or physical misreactions to make him feel bad. For him, it is only this way in combat.

In Kata, we do not have the crutches of contact, the pressing moment, and the attacking enemy. We have only ourselves and the movement. The trick is to induce the same feelings and reactions into Kata that are found in fighting. Then, the master of the form may attain, alone, without an opponent, and whenever and as often as he chooses, the same mental and physical accomplishments as the "restricted fighter."

Kata then becomes a limitless study of a master's techniques and plans of attack, a statement of flexibility, and an exercise of the mind-body in concentration and awareness.

A truly formidable exercise.

INTRODUCTION TO KWAN MU FIRST EFFORT

Karate training can be loosely divided into three areas. In the center, we find the drills and the exercises. On one side of the center we find the formal exercise (Kata), and on the other side we find the free-fighting (Kumite). Research into technique is based on the formal exercise or textbook. In free-fighting we leave the pure action of the Kata and apply what we have learned. By means of the drills and exercises, Kata and Kumite are tied together. Drill-work acts as a catalyst causing the lessons of Kata to transfer out of theory into the field of applied action. Originally, the inventors of Kata were renown fighters of the day and exploration into their Kata is necessary for a thorough training in the Martial Arts.

When we look closely at Kata we can find three basic types of action, better referred to as mannerisms and idioms. First we find the cultural heritage, second, the physical and psychological facets of the composer and/or performer, and lastly the pure action that the form attempts to teach. If we can remove the cultural idiom imposed upon the form, and those actions necessitated by the physical and psychological make-up of the various developers of Karate, then the pure action of technique may be contemplated. The problem not only becomes one of modulating kata to meet the demands of present day practitioners, but of deep and long lasting significance in the philosophical development of today's Karate.

Unlike ancient cultures, our culture is not faced with the ever present danger of physical attack. We do not have the same likelihood of being called on to defend ourselves by physical means. We are faced most often with mental and psychological bombardment on a day-to-day basis. Certain methods of attack and defense differ greatly in our society. Poking out the eyes or smashing the testicles may be a fair game in some parts of the world, but would offend the sensitivities of most of us. In our technical society we find our members asserting their authority and presence by psychological means instead of physical force.

Actual physical structure varies greatly within our culture as well as in relation to other peoples. Modifications must be made in technique to adapt striking with the hands and feet to our body structures. The problem is basic. Given the physical structure of the human body, how best can anatomy, psychology, and physical laws be combined to produce an efficient and sapient fighting unit.

Other factors also enter in. Since we drive many places instead of using more physical methods of transportation, our structures will be different from the plainsman, the mountainman, or the seafarer. The garb of each particular type of individuals will vary also in relation to climate. Techniques have to change to be efficient. The use of central heating not only affects the method and ability to perform, but also the type of technique used. For example, in a cold region with no central heating, the warm clothing may be impenetrable to many techniques and will limit the mobility of the fighters.

The First Effort of Kwan Mu is a study of the Pinan II and IV Kata in relation to the above factors. Without destroying the sense of rhythm of the Pinan forms KWAN MU SEEKS TO DERIVE THE PURE ACTION BY REMOVING CULTURAL, PHYSICAL, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPOSITIONS. In this attempt to discover pure action, only the cultural heritage and the physical or psychological restraints are surpassed. What remains is the swift, accurate, and deadly Art of Karate. NOTHING IS WASTED AND NOTHING IS WITHHELD. This realization of the essential transcends the physical and leads to enlightenment.

THE FORMAL EXERCISE AS A DANCE

It is hard to codify what one knows instinctively. We use Karate defends and attack methods to subtly work with the body's control systems. The Kata of Karate shares this capacity with its' counter-part, the dance. Dancing has values applicable to the human endeavor which are often lost on the Karateka solely interested in fighting. As it is difficult to convince someone of the value of something of which he has no knowledge, the following commentary will outline the common values of the dance in order that the Karate practitioner may judge the comparative values therein.

Dancing is an art that expresses impulses, desires, and feelings. Every art encompasses Content, Form, Message, and Means. These are expressed in the dance by the element of Movement.

Movement has basically three facets to be considered here. The first is Locomotor, the actual movements of walking, running, leaping, etc.. The second is Axial, pendulum actions, sustained actions, percussive actions, propulsive actions, etc.. The third and last is a combination of the first two.

Space, Time, and Force are bound up in movement. Space is utilized in five ways; Direction, Body Position (prone, kneeling, standing, reaching), Dimension (size of movement), Movement to or from the gaze, and Floor Pattern. Time has three facets of involvement; Tempo, Beat (even or uneven), and Accent (regular or syncopated). Force considers Dynamics (light or heavy), Quality (staccato or legato).. Force is also the range of intensity of the movement. Strength and agility are needed to expand the energies necessary for its application.

If the above outline is accepted as being the criteria for dance performance and understanding, one may interchange the word Kata for dance and see that the outline indeed describes Karate movement. If it does, then what is the physical difference between a Karated Kata and dancing? Is a dancer then a Karateka? Perhaps the Karateka is a dancer.

The resemblance ceases with the different philosophical values held in each art. Steeling the mind to cope with harsh physical punishment and achieving the will to endure unto death or victory mandates a deeply imprinted ethical base. This is not achieved by practice or fighting. It is entirely the product of the inculcated and cultured mind. All art expands the senses and helps to accomplish this goal.

THE KOAN OF KWAN MU, FIRST EFFORT

The feeling and mood of the form is introduced with the opening bow. The bow recognizes the serious endeavor the practitioner is about to attempt and gives credit and respect to those who have created this vehicle of expression. The character and worth of the performer to express the work of the master creating the kata is exemplified by the treatment of the opening.

After the bow, a traditional salute of the particular school or style is customarily given. The KWANMUKAN practitioner calmly assumes a natural posture with the hands open at the sides. Lifting his elbows high above his shoulders, he will place the open hands over the eyes, thumbs down and right hand covering the left. This signifies the unknowingness before birth and the newly awakened consciousness to be brought forth through action.

Then, with a sharp motion he tears his hands directly outwards horizontally enscribing a downward arc, ending with the right hand sudo striking the left palm directly in front of the Hara. This represents the sudden coming to awareness that life brings and the truth that all comes from a single realization centered in the Hara.

"I clear my mind, I set my attitude. This is my world, this is how I see it. It won't, nor will I, ever be exactly so again".

Anticipation limits the mind. Expectation of attack limits response. It is said that the mind works best when it works as though it is not present. Attachment to a moment in time that might never occur, or having been, may never repeat itself does not allow the self to react freely and mirror the ever changing ambient.

The antagonist in kata is oneself. The visualization of an attack and the resultant defend is a reflection of the inner self. We must "know" our foe. No one else can do it for us. The ego, the self, arises out of memory and sensation which induces us to identify with the past.

How then can the self be found to combat the untried enemy? The answer is found by existing through the opponent.

Funikoshi Gichin said, "There is no first attack in Karate." (Karate Ni Sente Nashi). He understood that each man and his opponent exist through each other and become one; making first attack an impossibility.

Through form we develop an uninhibited spirit. The mind must utilize its innate and spontaneous intelligence freely and without effort. Kata is a study in this concept. It is a controlled exercise designed to show spirit, awareness, strength, attitude, and anticipations.

When one anticipates, who has made the first attack? This is the Koan which opens the first effort.

KWAN MU
1st Effort

1. Turn 90⁰CC to a RBStance and execute L HS Pressing Block.
2. Right away execute RT HS Rising Pressing Block and pull LH to chest area.
3. Execute LFT MS STPunch. Pull RT Hand to side.
4. Turn 180⁰ Cwise to B forming LST BStance and execute RT HS Rising Pressing Block.
5. Right away execute LFT HS Rising Pressing Block and pull RT Hand to chest area.
6. Execute RT MS STPunch - pull LFT Hand to side
7. Pull RT Foot to Lft side standing up straight toward C and execute Lft Snap Frt Kick while at the same time executing Lft MS BFist striking block
8. Lower foot and execute RT thrust BKick with RT BFBT strike toward D
9. Return RT Foot to Lft Foot position and step out toward C with LFT foot forming FF Stance toward C at the same time execute LFT MS PBlock
10. Execute extended LFT HS BFist Strike followed right away by RT Frt Kick and set RT Foot down forming RT FRTStance.
11. Execute extended RT HS BFist Strike followed right away by LFT FRTKick and set LFT Foot down forming LFT FRTStance.
12. Execute LFT HS Bfist strike and pull LFT Hand Closed Fist palm down toward RT Hip at the same time stepping forward to form RT FRTStance and executing simultaneously RT MS Vert Fist Punch
13. Turn 180⁰ CCwise to D and execute LFT MS BFist striking block and right away execute RT Snap FRTKick
14. Lower RT Foot to floor and immediately execute LFT SKick to B, at the same time, execute LFT MS BFist parallel to Leg
15. Return foot and hand and with RT Foot step out toward B forming RT FRT Stance and execute RT MS LPunch. (14 and 15 should be done in rapid sequence)
16. Without shifting Rear Foot, execute RT rear Thrust BKick to A at the same time execute RT MS BFist parallel to leg.
17. Return Leg and Hand and with LFT Foot step out toward A forming LFT FRTStance and execute LFT MS LPunch (moves 16 and 17 should be done in rapid sequence)
18. Turn 90⁰ toward D forming RT BStance and execute LFT LS Block.

KWAN MU FIRST EFFORT
(cont'd)

19. Execute RT HS Punch followed right away by RT FRTKick. Set foot down forming RT FRTStance
20. Execute RT Hand CR RBlock (Hand starts at Left Hip) followed right away by LFT MSPunch
21. Execute LFT Snap FRTKick. (19,20, 21 done without pause)
22. Then drop LFT Foot to ground, execute RT MS Punch.
23. Step out toward D to form RT FRTStance while stepping, execute LFT and RR MS Punches (22 & 23 are done without pause, rapidly)
24. Turn CCwise 270⁰ toward A forming RT BStance & execute LFT MS PBlock.
25. Execute LFT HS BFist FRT Strike and immediately step out to form RT FRTStance while executing RT MS LPunch.
26. Turn 180⁰ Cwise to B forming LFT BStance and execute RT MS PBlock
27. Execute RT HS BFist Strike and immediately step out with LFT Foot to form LFT FRTStance while executing LFT MS LPunch
28. Recover LFT F to starting posture, Standing Up facing C and assume ready stance.

ANNOTATIONS TO KWAN MU I

Figure 1. Can you imagine how insulting an improper bow would be to the elders and seniors? A poor quality bow would reflect on the spirit of the Master whose character is represented in the form. Therefore, the correct bow must be performed to the satisfaction of those who are about to review the kata and to reflect proper honor and respect on the kata originators whose character is represented in the form. A weak bow is a sign of weak character and a signal to the karate seniors that the performer lacks conviction and doesn't respect the wisdom of the old masters.

Figures 2,3, and 4. This is a very ancient movement. Formally introduced in the "Kushanku" Kata by Karate Sakagawa, (a student of Kushanku) the action was redefined by "Bushi" Sokon Matsumura in the "Patsai" kata, and finally chosen as the first sequence in the Pinan II Kata. Introduction as the first movement of Kwan Mu I does not affect the wisdom of the kata as a beginner's form. Originally, the Pinan II kata was taught as the first kata in the series. This movement was felt by the masters to be important enough so that it was chosen to be the first sequence taught. By liberalizing the classical format, Kwan Mu allows for a free interplay between the kata and the kumite. Without breaking the original rhythm pattern, the block-attack techniques of Kushanku have been modified while still retaining strong classical traditions.

Though defined as a High Section Block, this action in reality is a high punching attack with the elbow thrust outward into the opponent's exposed inner arm. A hard powerful attack is made while a soft (indirect) block causes trauma to the inner arm.

Figures 5,6, and 7. Repeat to the opposite side.

Figure 8. As a movement of repose, the Water Flow Movement hides a whirlpool of dangerous proportions. As you and your opponent become one, your body will naturally move to avert your opponent's attack. Water is liquid and formless. Water never loses its nature. It always flows downward and teaches the lesson that we can overcome any difficulty or hardship if we go forward with self-confidence. Gathering strength, the body-mind-spirit becomes capable of flowing like water. The hands pulled to the hip draw the attacker into the twists and twirls of the water as it follows the path of least resistance. Grabbing at the water, it quickly flows through the fingers yet while moving slowly it destroys mighty mountains. The defender, like water, flows in and around the attack as the attacker is swept away by the calming flowing water. Strike at water. Will it not flow unharmed around your striking weapon?

The koan of the First Effort is redirected along the Eightfold Path. Repose in this position and reflect on the koan.

Figures 9,10, & 11. Leg stretching drills in the form of a front kick and a back kick are incorporated at this point. Both kicks are related through the front stance. Prior movements loosened the upper body and raised the body temperature. This step energizes muscles necessary for kicking. Hand and foot used in unison help prevent disruptive actions and allow the beginner a more natural movement and balance. Back muscles are also trained for better kicking.

Figures 12-20. These movements bear a distinct relationship to the Pinan II Kata. The beginning student is introduced at an early level to the basics of kumite. The instructor can separate the actions, vary them, and use this plan to introduce novice block and attack techniques. The front kick is used as a basic training aid easily mastered by the beginner as well as effective in application. The actual interpretation of the kick varies in relation to the opponent. If you begin a right front kick and the opponent moves to your left, the kick would be changed to a RH kick to follow the opponent. Were he to move to your right, a side kick would probably ensue. The designation as a front kick in the form should not leave the other kicking variations unconsidered.

Figures 25-30. These actions relate to the sidekick elbow strike in Pinan IV. Both the KwanMu method and the method

in Pinan IV are identical and contain the same lesson. In Pinan IV, since we have not completed the initial drive, we do not need to step forward to complete the initial action. In Kwan Mu I the initial drive has been completed and to complement the kick, a step and a punch are necessary. Two powerful techniques are a proper side kick and a strong "reverse" punch. If the kata movement were performed quickly in free-fighting neither the elbow strike or the step punch would be done. As we retract the kicking foot and turn in the direction of the kick, the back hand would be quickly brought forward to punch before the step could be completed. This is another ancient action going back into the Kata. View the first kick-punch combination as a skip side kick and a punch. The second kick-punch combination should be viewed as a power-driven back kick followed by a punch. (Both common fighting maneuvers).

Figures 31-39. The return drive of the kata can be used in continued sequence, separated, or re-ordered to provide just about any combination that can be used to attack in kumite. These movements answer the questions posed in the return drive of recapitulation in the Pinan IV Kata and complement those of the return drive of Pinan II. Also, they are the attacking combinations of the two-man forms (the defends of which are contained in the Third Effort).

This return arsenal provides a class plan for the instructor's use for exploration of fighting actions and combinations for both the beginning and advanced practitioner.

Figures 37-39. These merit a close look. The three punches can easily be imposed, and interpreted after the side kicks or at the end of the last two sequences. They also can stand alone on their own value. Much can be learned about hand attacks from these actions.

Figures 40-45. These are the last two movements of the Pinan II Kata. They are meant to reinforce the block and counter abilities of the fighter. Note that the punch, if performed quickly as in actual combat, will actually proceed the step. This allows for a continued follow through.

Figure 46. The bow should be performed with the attitude expected from an actor who has performed brilliantly in front of an audience and turns for his due respect, confident that he has done his best. Humbly he respects the lesson that he has learned.