

The genesis of selected military hand-to-hand combative techniques in Polish Armed Forces

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Abstract

Background and Study Aim:

Military hand-to-hand combat is a part of physical training of soldiers that is very different from the typical preparation for competition in combat sports. But military hand-to-hand combat training uses methods, forms and means from physical culture to ensure soldiers' all-round psycho-physical development. The combative aspect of preparing soldiers for close combat is based on effective techniques from selected martial arts, combat sports and self-defence systems. The aim of this article is general knowledge about the origin of the selected military hand-to-hand combat system techniques in Polish Armed Forces.

Material and Methods:

The military hand-to-hand combat system of the soldiers of the General Tadeusz Kościuszko Military University of Land Forces was analysed. Due to the civilian nature of this work, the sensitive data of the soldiers cannot be made public. The case study of the research sample was dictated by the accessibility to the Wrocław population of soldiers. The method of observation of exercisers during practical classes and the method of analysis of secondary sources were used.

Results:

The analysed system of military hand-to-hand combat is based on hand techniques from boxing. Foot techniques are specific to kyokushin karate. Meanwhile, the techniques of throws, grabs, chokes and levers are based on judo. All incapacitating elements are derived from the Israeli combat system krav maga.

Conclusions:

The combination of combat techniques from boxing, judo, karate kyokushin and krav maga is highly effective in military close combat. An even use of aspects of martial arts, combat sports and self-defence systems is noted.

Keywords:

combat sports • meditation • physical culture • psycho-physical development

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Boxing – a combat sport involving fistfighting above the waist. The exact rules of this fight variety are determined by the professional and amateur boxing federation's [31].

Karate kyokushin – a combat sport created by Masutatsu Oyama. It is derived from karate-do, goju-ryu karate, boxing, judo and Korean martial arts. The kumite competitions are conducted in a knockdown system [32].

Judo – a combat sport created by Jigorō Kanō on the foundations of jū-jutsu. Judo techniques are divided into three groups: throws (*nage-waza*), grabs (*katame-waza*) and strikes (*atemi-waza*) [33].

Krav maga – an Israeli combat system that consists of a combination of the most effective martial arts techniques relating to real-life situations and based on human reflexes [34].

Combat sport – *noun* a sport in which one person fights another, e.g. wrestling, boxing and the martial arts [35].

Martial arts – *plural noun* any of various systems of combat and self-defence, e.g. judo or karate, developed especially in Japan and Korea and now usually practised as a sport [35].

Self-defence *noun* fighting techniques used for defending oneself against physical attack, especially unarmed combat techniques such as those used in many of the martial arts [35].

Motor – *adjective* relating to muscle activity, especially voluntary muscle activity, and the consequent body movements [35].

Technique – *noun* a way of performing an action [35].

Tactics – *plural noun* the art of finding and implementing means to achieve immediate or short-term aims [35].

Meditation – *noun* the emptying of the mind of thoughts, or the concentration of the mind on one thing, in order to aid mental or spiritual development, contemplation, or relaxation [35].

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary martial methods are divided into three groups [1]. The first group is made up of martial arts, where the training goal is comprehensive self-improvement and maintenance of practitioners' health [2]. The second group is made up of combat sports aimed at all-round preparation and undertaking sports competition through direct clashes between competing athletes according to specific rules [3]. The third group consists of self-defence systems aimed at comprehensive mastery of utilitarian combat and its effective use [4].

Military hand-to-hand combat is a combat system characterised by multifunctional and utilitarian techniques that allow the use of combat methods in non-sport clashes, which are very different from sport fighting techniques [5, 6]. The aim of fighting here is to deprive the attacker of further desire or ability to attack and fight. It is necessary to defend and attack in the simplest and most effective way possible [7]. Military hand-to-hand combat uses the basic and most effective techniques that enrich the natural defensive reflexes of humans [8]. These techniques do not require long-term training, as in the case of martial arts. What is important here is high-level motor, technical, tactical and mental preparation [9]. To this end, knowledge from physical culture is used to provide soldiers with comprehensive psychophysical development [10]. Therefore, in the training of soldiers, physical and mental activities need to be prepared, at which point physical development is the same as consciousness of mind in any, even extremely stressful, situation [11]. Military hand-to-hand combat training is intended to have practical application in everyday and combat situations. Adepts use basic movements in combination with given combat techniques that are intended to lead to an effective defence against attack. The main focus is on speed, strength, endurance, coordination and the appropriate selection of fighting techniques to the soldiers' somatic build [12].

Each country in the world has its own military combative system, which corresponds to its traditions, social and cultural characteristics and achievements in combat sports on the international arena [13]. Therefore, the combat aspect of the preparation of soldiers for hand-to-hand combat is based on effective combat techniques

from selected martial arts, combat sports and self-defence systems that are specific to a particular region of the world [14].

The aim of this article is general knowledge about the origin of the selected military hand-to-hand combat system techniques in Polish Armed Forces

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The Polish military hand-to-hand combat system was analysed. The case study involved soldiers from the General Tadeusz Kościuszko Military University of Land Forces and was dictated by accessibility to the soldier population in Wrocław. Due to the civilian nature of the work, the sensitive data of the soldiers could not be made public. For the analysis, the method of observation of the exercising soldiers during practical classes was used. The individual authors of this paper who conducted the experiment are master class coaches in judo and ju-jitsu; ju-jitsu, karate and kickboxing; judo, sambo and Thai boxing; fencing, judo and wrestling. The method of secondary source analysis was then used to ascertain the origin of the techniques of the analysed military self-defence system.

The project received a positive opinion of the Senate Commission for Research Ethics at the Wrocław University of Health and Sport Sciences, number 7/2021.

RESULTS

The military hand-to-hand combat system under study was found to be based on 3 techniques from boxing, 9 from kyokushin karate, 8 from judo and 12 krav maga (Table 1).

The compiled techniques are taught in two stages. The first consists of proficient mastery of all techniques and their use against one opponent, while the second stage consists of proficient mastery of the metastability between all techniques and their use against several attackers. The movement of the practitioners is also important. There is no single established pattern. The soldiers rested by stretching different parts of the body during rest breaks. Furthermore, military hand-to-hand combat exercises always ended with a 15-minute meditation.

Table 1. Summary of techniques of the military self-defence system under study.

Hand-to-hand combat techniques in the original professional nomenclature			
Boxing	karate kyokushin	Judo	krav maga
straight punches	mae-geri	te-waza	head blows
left and right hooks	yoko-geri	koshi-waza	elbow strikes
uppercuts	mawashi-geri	ashi-waza	fist hammer strikes
	ura mawshi geri	yoku-waza	strikes with the inside of the hand
	ushiro-geri	osaekomi-waza	elbow strikes, stand and ground
	hiza-geri	shime-waza	standing elbow levers and ground fights
	kin-geri	kansetsu-waza	strangulations, stand and ground
	kansetsu-geri	ukemi-waza	ground knee levers
	kakato-geri		defence against strangulation from all directions
			defences using underhand objects
			defence against knife attack
			defence against an attack with a telescopic baton

DISCUSSION

The analysed military self-defence system is a collection of thirty-two techniques from different types of combative methods. It is a combination of the most effective combat sports: boxing [15], kyokushin karate [16], judo [17] and the krav maga [18] combat system. The practice of boxing techniques teaches soldiers to fight with their fists, the ability to deliver and receive blows to the head and torso. The practice of karate kyokushin foot techniques, on the other hand, teaches soldiers the full use of their lower limbs on their opponent's entire body, as well as the ability to deliver and receive punches and kicks to the head, torso and below the waist. The practice of judo techniques, on the other hand, teaches soldiers throws, grabs, chokes and levers on their opponent's entire body, as well as falling skills. The whole thing is tied together by the adapted Israeli krav maga fighting system.

It expands the analysed military self-defence system to include non-standard techniques for upper limb strikes, upper and lower limb levers, strangulations and defence sequences against white weapons. In addition, practitioners' movement was found to be specific to their somatic constitution, as there was

no single imposed pattern [19]. This shows that the system in question is good for everyone and is free of limitations [20]. In view of the above, the analysed military self-defence system of hand-to-hand combat was considered complete and legitimate for soldiers of the General Tadeusz Kosciuszko Military University of Land Forces.

The official name of this combat system practiced in Poland is classified. Moreover, the course of observed classes allows us to state that the analysed military self-defence system of hand-to-hand combat in motor, technical, tactical and mental preparation uses methods, forms and means specific to combat sports [21]. Moreover, the incorporation of meditation and relaxed stretching in some of the observed training units presents the hallmarks of martial arts [22]. The above allows us to conclude that there is an even use of aspects of martial arts, combat sports and self-defence systems in the analysed military hand-to-hand combat system.

Firstly, the system in question is based on the recommended fighting techniques from different fighting methods and is positioned in the group of fighting systems [23]. It refers both to fighting

in direct combat, including at short range using white-knuckles, and to fighting against several unarmed opponents.

Secondly, it uses the theory and practice of sport located in physical culture sciences [24] from the combat sports group [25]. This allows for the maintenance of physical fitness among soldiers.

Thirdly, the weaving of meditation and stretching into the regular parts of training has the hallmarks of martial arts training [26]. The health-promoting foundations of the analysed military self-defence system become apparent here [27].

In summary, the origin of the techniques of the military self-defence system of hand-to-hand combat in Poland corresponds to tradition, social and cultural popularity and the achievements of Poles

in boxing, karate kyokushin and judo. Krav maga weaves the whole into a logical and complete military self-defence system of hand-to-hand combat. The two-stage preparation of soldiers differentiates their level of proficiency, which can be likened to sports levels [28]. The acquisition of experience by soldiers in military hand-to-hand combat has an impact on the formation of their personality [29], which can affect consciousness of mental in extremely stressful situations [30].

CONCLUSIONS

The combination of combat techniques from boxing, judo, karate kyokushin and krav maga is highly effective in military close combat. An even use of aspects of martial arts, combat sports and self-defence systems is noted.

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